Guam reports 2 COVID-19-related deaths; 243 new cases. PAGE 3
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Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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New COVID subvariant found

SITE VISIT

CAPT. PHILIP REGINA

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, center, the commanding general for the 9th Mission Support Command, Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii, gets a tour of the CNMI Department of Public Safety's firing range in Marpi, Saipan, last July 5, 2022. Also in the photo are DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero, left, and 9th MSC's Command Sgt. Maj. Corey Thompson.

Story on Page 6

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has confirmed that a new subvariant of omicron, a variant of COVID-19, was found in one of the specimens that were recently shipped out for testing.

According to CHCC CEO Esther Muña, a specimen that was shipped out for testing over two weeks ago has confirmed that the CNMI now has cases of BA.5, the most recent subvariant of COVID-19.

"We do have cases of BA.5. It's confirmed. It took awhile for us to verify but we've gotten back the confirmation a

See COVID on Page 4

Santos, 3 others file candidacies

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) and three others were the first to file their candidacies before the Commonwealth Election Commission in Susupe yesterday for the Nov. 8 general election.

Igitol

CEC executive director Kayla Igitol said the CEC started accepting submission of nominating petitions and candidacy documents yesterday and that Santos was the earliest to file at 7:49am, followed by Magdalena San Nicolas Mesngon, Ignacio Villagomez Cabrera, and Joseph Muña Mendiola.

Igitol said that Santos is running for mayor of Rota as an indepen-

See SANTOS on Page 4

IPI-CCC settlement accord expected by week's end

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Best Sunshine International Ltd., Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC, and the Commonwealth Casino Commission expect to sign the settlement agreement that has been in the works for the past month that would keep the CCC from revoking IPI's casino license.

According to a joint report on the status of negotiations,

See IPI-CCC on Page 4

Man who murdered security guard is paroled

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Board of Parole has granted early release for one of three men who were convicted of beating a Marianas High School security guard to death back in 2008.

Following a day of deliberations, Edward Iglecias Blas gained a majority vote from the CNMI Board of Parole in favor of granting his application for parole.

Blas was convicted back in 2011 of murder in the first degree after pleading guilty to the brutal killing of an MHS security guard with two others as part of a plan to rob the school.

In a short comment from parole officer Jason Lizama, he said that no matter what the board's decision is, parole

See MAN on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

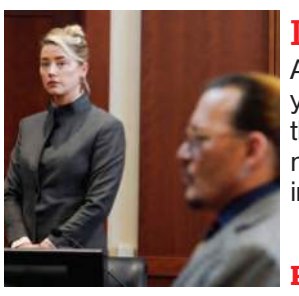
INSIDE

BUSINESS
Ex-prisoners are filling in some of the 11.3 million open jobs in the U.S. amid a dire labor shortage.

PAGE 11

NATION
President Joe Biden is celebrating a new bipartisan law meant to reduce gun violence.

PAGE 12



LIFE & STYLE
Amber Heard's lawyers allege that one of the jurors in the defamation trial served improperly.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

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Local

Hawaii museum revisits history of gender-fluid healers

By AUDREY McAVOY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU (AP)—More than 500 years ago, Hawaiians placed four boulders on a Waikiki beach to honor visitors from the court of Tahiti's king who had healed the sick. They were "mahu," which in Hawaiian language and culture refers to someone with dual male and female spirit and a mixture of gender traits.

The stones were neglected for many years, as Christian missionaries and other colonizing Westerners suppressed the role of mahu in Hawaiian society. At one point a bowling alley was built over the boulders.

Officials restored the stones multiple times since the 1960s but informational plaques installed next to them omitted references to mahu.

The stones and the history of the four healers now are featured in an exhibit at Bishop Museum in Honolulu. The display highlights the deep roots of gender fluidity in Polynesia.

Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu is mahu and one of the exhibit's curators. She said the healers were revered for their skill and hopes their story will show children in Hawaii that "proper Hawaiian culture" doesn't pass judgment against those "who have elements of duality."

"They were respected and honored because the people knew that their male and female duality made them even more powerful a healer," Wong-Kalu said.

Kapaemahu was the leader of the four healers, and the exhibit is named The Healer Stones of Kapaemahu. Their story was passed down orally, like all Hawaiian stories, until a written language was developed in the 1800s.

But Hawaiians were discouraged from talking about mahu. DeSoto Brown, a Bishop Museum historian and the exhibit's lead curator, said Christian missionaries who arrived in 1820 forbade anything that deviated from "clearly defined roles and presentation" of male and female genders.

The earliest known written account of the mahu healers is a 1906 manuscript by James Alapuna Harbottle Boyd, the son-in-law of Archibald Cleghorn, who owned the Waikiki property where the stones were at the time. Cleghorn's wife, Princess Likelike, and daughter, Princess Kaiulani, were known to place seaweed and offer prayers at the stones when they swam.

Boyd's manuscript "Tradition of the Wizard Stones of Ka-Pae-Mahu" said the Hawaiian people loved the healers for their "tall stature, courteous ways and kindly manners" and their cures became famous across Oahu.

"Their ways and great physique were overshadowed by their low, soft speech, and they became as one with those they came in contact with," Boyd wrote. "They were unsexed, by nature, and their habits coincided with their womanly seeming, although manly in stature and general bearing."

When it was time for the healers to leave, four boulders were brought down from Oahu's Kaimuki area. Two were placed at the site of the healers' hut and the others where they bathed in the ocean. Idols indicating the dual spirit of the healers were placed under each stone.

Many Hawaiians grew up not knowing about Hawaiian concepts of mahu or the stones because the American businessmen who overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 banned Hawaiian language instruction in schools and discouraged speaking it in homes. Generations of Hawaiians lost connections to cultural traditions.

Wong-Kalu, 50, said as a child she was made to believe mahu was a derogatory word. She remembers being among those who would sit on the stones and drape towels over them after swimming, oblivious to their significance.

Mahu are akin to "two-spirit" common in many Native American cultures, Wong-Kalu said, adding there are physical, emotional, mental and spiritual elements to being mahu. The representation of male and female depends on the person, she said.

"In Hawaii, one could exist really in the middle," she said.

The stones nearly were lost just before the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. At the time, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin reported the boulders would be blasted or removed after a developer leased Cleghorn's property to build a bowling alley.

Following an outcry, plans emerged for a concrete walkway between the stones. But the developer instead built over them.

The stones were uncovered two decades later when the city tore down buildings to build a public beach park. Elders recalled the story of the stones and urged they remain. The city agreed and created a plaque that mentioned the Tahitian healers but didn't say anything about them being mahu.

In 1997, the city fenced off the stones and dedicated a new plaque. It also didn't reference mahu.

During both periods, waves of homophobia and transphobia washed over Honolulu. In the 1960s, a new state law prohibited cross-dressing and police forced drag performers to wear a button saying: "I Am A Boy." Three decades later, there was backlash in Hawaii and nationally when the Hawaii Supreme Court sided with same-sex couples seeking the right to marry.

The Bishop Museum exhibit, on display through Oct. 16, recounts this history and displays artifacts like massage sticks and a medicine pounder that healers would have used centuries ago. Islander concepts of gender fluidity are explored through stories like that of King Kamehameha III and his male lover.

A map shows terms used in Polynesia for those who don't identify as male or female, including "fa'afafine" in Samoa and "leiti" in Tonga.

Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson helped curate the exhibit and hope it will spur the city to tell the full story of the mahu at the site of the stones.

Ian Scheuring, spokesperson for Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi, said the city is researching the issue and local leaders plan to meet with members of the LGBTQ and Native Hawaiian communities to learn how they can help tell the "true and complete" story of the healers.

Tatiana Kalaniopua Young, a Native Hawaiian anthropologist, mahu and a director of the Hawaii LGBT Legacy Foundation, said the story the stones and healers helped her family understand that she was not "this weird creature that's outside of the norm." And that in a Hawaiian sense, she was part of the norm.

"It gave me a sense of place and purpose as a mahu and it really made me proud to be Kanaka Maoli, or Native Hawaiian," she said.

Guam reports 2 COVID-19-related deaths; 243 new cases

The Joint Information Center in Guam reported two COVID-19-related fatalities yesterday, bringing to 373 the total number of COVID-10-related deaths in the U.S. territory.

The 372nd COVID-19-related fatality was pronounced dead on arrival at the Guam Memorial Hospital on July 8, 2022. The patient was a 50-year-old male, unvaccinated, with underlying health conditions, who tested positive on July 8.

The 373rd COVID-19-related fatality occurred at the Guam Regional Medical City on July 10, 2022. The patient was an 89-year-old female, unvaccinated, with underlying health conditions, who tested positive on July 10.

"To their families and those who loved them, [first gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I extend our deepest condolences and sympathies in your time of loss and grieving," said Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero. "As we push forward with our island's aggressive recovery efforts, we must continue to incorporate the lifesaving mitigation measures that brought us to where we are today, most especially vaccinations and boosters. Please do your part to protect yourself, protect your families, and to protect our community."

Also, the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services reported 243 new cases of COVID-19 from 3,351 specimens analyzed from tests administered July 8 – 10, 2022:

■ July 11: 24 of 808 test positive for COVID-19

■ July 10: 99 of 937 test positive for COVID-19

■ July 9: 120 of 1,606 test positive for COVID-19

Thirty-seven of the cases reported yesterday were through the Department of Defense. To date, there have been a total of 53,066 officially reported cases in Guam, 373 deaths, 943 cases in active isolation, and 51,750 not in active isolation. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Torres proposes to allocate $32.62M in ARPA funds for FY 2023 budget

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' recent revised proposed budget for the operation of the CNMI government and related agencies in fiscal year 2023 will allocate a total of $32.62 million of American Rescue Plan Act funding, which doubles his initial April 1 submission of $16.09 million in ARPA monies.

According to the governor's revised proposed budget submitted to the Legislature, $30.93 million is allocated for 2,103 full time employees and $1.69 for all others, for a grand total of $32,62 million in ARPA funding for the central government.

» Governor's initial budget proposal submission was only $16.09 million in ARPA monies

The governor's initial budget proposal was $16.09 million in total ARPA money for the central government, covering 2,069 FTEs.

Among the major changes in the revised budget using ARPA are under the total independent programs, which now have $14.08 million, compared to only $1.29 million for 109 FTEs in the initial submission.

In the revised budget proposal for independent programs, $400,000 is allocated to the Northern Marianas Sports Association to support athletes; $49,182 for the CNMI Scholarship Office; $616,204 for Substance Abuse Prevention, $1.17 million for the elected attorney general, $1.89 million for Active Employee DC Employer Contribution, $104,442 for the Joeten Kiyu Public Library, and $26,706 for the Commonwealth Museum $26,706.

Under independent programs, there will be within-grade increases of $1.66 million and equitable adjustment wages in the amount of $881,965.

The revised budget submission reflects changes to ARPA funding that primarily includes funding for the remaining 20% of wages to maintain 80-hour work weeks.

Under other programs, $1.25 million is allocated for the Northern Marianas College, and $1.37 million for the Marianas Visitors Authority, for a grand total of $2.62 million.

Under the Executive Branch, from $10.81 million in the initial budget proposal, it increased to $11.85 million.

For Rota, from $1.67 million it went slightly down to $1.61 million.

For Tinian and Aguiguan, from $1.47 million it increased to $1.57 million.

For Saipan Mayor and Municipal Council, from $564,585 it decreased to $466,300.

For boards and commissions, from $265,229 it increased to $411,845. From zero proposed budget for Cannabis Commission board, $70,048 is now allocated for six FTEs.

Torres' revised proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 from the general funds increased the net budgetary resources from $101.35 million to $104.35 million.

Sasamoto bill offers 6-month pause on liquid fuel tax

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In this photo taken on May 15, 2021, 18th Youth Congress Sen. YuriHana DLG. Sasamoto is applauded as she enters the Senate chamber during their inauguration. Sasamoto was elected Youth Congress speaker during a special session Friday.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

New 18th Youth Congress Speaker Sen. YuriHana Deleon Guerrero Sasamoto introduced Friday a bill that seeks to exempt fuel distributors, importers, or retailers from paying the liquid fuel tax for a period of six months.

Sasamoto introduced Youth Congress Bill 18-09 when she was still the floor leader during their special session Friday in the House of Representatives chamber.

Then-Youth Congress speaker Sen. Cielo Citalli Gutierrez Long referred the bill to the Committee on Resources Economic Development and Tourism.

The legislation—which is recommendatory in nature—seeks to amend the Commonwealth Code by providing a new subsection to reflect the six-month exemption. Bills passed by the Youth Congress have no force of law unless the CNMI Legislature passes it and the governor enacts it.

Sasamoto stated in the bill that residents of the CNMI feel constant strain due to increased costs for essential goods, especially at the gas pump where prices have significantly increased this past year. Sasamoto said that wholesalers and retailers are forced to pass on their cost of fuel to the consumer, which includes a fuel tax. She said higher gas prices are not only felt at the pump but in stores as well, where the cost of goods is increasing because of increased shipping and transportation costs.

Sasamoto said it is difficult for wholesalers and retailers to satisfy all the tax expenses on the quarterly tax returns and payments, which include the business gross income tax.

In order to significantly decrease the price of gas at the pump, she said it is more prudent to require that the payment of the liquid fuel taxes be temporarily paused for six months.

Later at Friday's session, Sasamoto was elected the new Youth Congress speaker, replacing Long, who left over the weekend for Harvard University.

Long is expected to submit anytime her resignation letter as a member of the Youth Congress.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB22-CHCC/CGC-SOC-022

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JULY 25TH, 2022 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

PROCUREMENT OF ONE (1) UNIT SPORT UTILITY VAN (SUV)

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

Quiz: What are the threats to sea turtles? Answer...

Threats!

- Illegal hunting
  - The biggest threat to our CNMI turtles
- Entanglement or ingestion of marine debris, plastic, oil, or chemicals
- Entanglement and accidental capture in fisheries
- Lights on beaches that can disorient turtles
- Disturbance
- Climate change and sea level rise

How you can help!

- Call the hotline below to report illegal activity.
- Peer pressure helps! Lead by example, it is no longer ok to harvest turtles, plus it's illegal to kill, or possess sea turtle meat or eggs.
- Participate in beach clean-up events
- Proper disposal of oil, batteries and chemicals
- Buy reusable items and reduce waste.
- Clean-up and dispose of fishing gear appropriately
- Leave them be... no lights, no sound

Call our 24/7 hotline to report harassment, poaching, or any sea turtle emergencies in the CNMI. The number is 670-287-8537

Inmate pleads guilty to assaulting federal officer

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Department of Corrections inmate has pleaded guilty to assaulting a prison guard and possessing methamphetamine and now awaits sentencing.

During a change of plea hearing before U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona last week, Derik Camacho Reyes pleaded guilty to one count of assaulting a federal officer or employee and one count of possession of contraband in prison.

Reyes is a repeat drug offender serving time at DOC.

Manglona accepted Reyes' plea and found him guilty of the offenses. She ordered Reyes to return to court for his sentencing on Oct. 7, at 1:30pm.

In addition, Manglona vacated Reyes' jury trial scheduled for July 26, and unsealed the plea agreement.

At the hearing, Reyes was represented by attorney David Banes while assistant U.S. attorney Albert Flores Jr. appeared for the federal government.

According to the plea agreement, Reyes was incarcerated as a prisoner of the local criminal justice system in the maximum-security section of Pod 4 at the CNMI prison.

On Feb. 15, 2022, Corrections officer Mario Cudiamat, while at his post, observed two federal prisoners interacting with Reyes. The interaction appeared suspicious to Cudiamat so, with the assistance of another prison guard, he approached the defendant.

The plea agreement stated that upon the officer's arrival at the cell, Reyes immediately attempted to flush an object down the toilet. However, before he could do so, Cudiamat grabbed Reyes' left hand which he later discovered contained a meth pipe that he was attempting to flush.

The defendant then turned while making a thrusting motion with his left hand toward the upper torso of Cudiamat.

The plea agreement stated that Reyes' left hand contained a meth pipe approximately 4.5 inches in length and approximately one inch of the sharp pipe protruded from the hand of Reyes while he thrust it at the prison guard.

In the struggle, Reyes forcefully used his body to push against the officer, who then fell back and hit his head on the steel metal prison door frame.

With the help of the other prison guard, Reyes was restrained.

After successfully restraining Reyes, the officers found a meth pipe and a small bag containing a white crystalline substance from the defendant's left hand. Immediately, the defendant surrendered a lighter, a cell phone, a cell phone charger, a power bank and two SIM cards, all of which are prohibited contraband.

Cudiamat was treated at the hospital for a contusion on the back of his head, and he was also treated for a chemical burn on his hand that was a result of his skin being exposed to methamphetamine during the assault.

The small bag of white crystalline substance recovered from the defendant's hand was analyzed by the Drug Enforcement Agency's Southwest Laboratory, and it was determined to contain 0.069 grams of methamphetamine.

IPI-CCC

From Page 1

the parties informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI that they are currently in material agreement regarding the terms of the settlement agreement and have been continuing to negotiate a few final terms.

The parties expect to come to a final agreement regarding terms in the next 24 to 48 hours.

Sister companies Best Sunshine and IPI informed the court that they expect to receive sufficient investment to assure their ability to make the financial commitment required by the settlement agreement.

In addition, the plaintiffs stated that upon receiving such investment, IPI and Best Sunshine plan to sign the settlement agreement (pending agreement on the final terms under negotiation) before the end of this week.

The parties are set to appear before the court at the status conference scheduled for today at 8:30am where they will discuss setting a briefing schedule in the event the settlement agreement is not finalized and executed by a certain date.

According to court documents, on July 1, the court held a status conference on this matter, at which the court set a status conference for July 12.

The court ordered the parties to provide a report regarding the status of the negotiations of a settlement agreement by July 11.

The Imperial Pacific Resort in Garapan, Saipan. CHRYSTAL MARINO

COVID

From Page 1

week or two weeks ago that we have BA.5," she said.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this newest subvariant, BA.5, is by far the most easily transmissible COVID-19 variant to date. The subvariant reportedly can elude previous immunity from COVID-19 infection and vaccination and currently accounts for more than half of country's new COVID-19 cases.

The CDC currently reports an average of over 100,000 new daily COVID-19 cases.

However, when asked if the community should be worried about this new strain, Muña said this new variant should not cause panic as it's all part of getting back to normal and getting back to normal does not mean COVID-19 no longer exists; instead, the new normal means proactively taking the needed safety measures to live day to day amidst COVID-19.

"Getting back to normal does not mean ignoring COVID exists. Getting back to normal means that you continue to wear your mask, especially if you're vulnerable or so you don't spread it to someone else," she said.

In addition, Muña urges everyone to take advantage of the preventative measures that are still being provided at no cost to the community.

"Also, think about boosters. Getting back to normal means really protecting yourself. It means getting all the preventive measures that have been provided to you and is still being provided. Testing is still available, we also have the treatment sites, and free home test kits. I mean that's basically what getting back to normal means," she said.

MAN

From Page 1

officers will continue to carry out their jobs of ensuring the community's safety while parolees work on rehabilitating themselves.

"Whatever the decision the board makes on the inmates that are granted parole, the Board of Parole Officers will continue to do their job to ensure that the community is safe by supervision and a close monitoring of each active parolee in the CNMI. Any minor infraction will be subjected to an arrest. Most importantly, we have a strong partnership with the Hope Recovery Center and the Community Guidance Center to assist our parolees in a successful re-integration into our community," he said.

According to a previous *Saipan Tribune* article, Blas was 16 years old when he was arrested with two other defendants for burglarizing MHS and robbing and killing a security guard.

Although he was a minor at the time, he was tried as an adult due to the severity of the charges.

Blas was sentenced in February 2011 to 24 years in prison as part of a plea deal.

He applied for parole back in 2020 but was denied. This was his second time to apply for parole.

In a previous memo from Chester Hinds, Chief Prosecutor for the Office of the Attorney General's Criminal Division, he told the Parole Board that the Commonwealth strongly opposes the release of Blas, but also recommended that, in the event that the inmate is granted early release despite the division's opposition, Blas should still be subject to the probationary terms and conditions stated in the sentence and commitment order issued by Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja.

"The defendant's 20 years probation shall be supervised probation, and if earlier paroled, both the OAG and Parole Office shall have concurrent jurisdiction, and to include all other applicable impositions of the inmate's sentence," he said.

Another parole applicant, Edward Tudela Sablan, who was convicted of sexual assault in the second degree, was not granted early release.

According to court documents, Sablan pleaded guilty to sexual assault in the second degree back in 2020 after forcing himself on a woman and inappropriately touching her.

He was sentenced to five years, all suspended except for two years and shall be released on Feb. 26, 2023.

SANTOS

From Page 1

dent candidate.

The senator said yesterday that she still has a lot of work ahead of her as she will continue to meet with her people and engage in "meaningful conversations and attentively listen and hear first-hand their issues, concerns, ideas, recommendations and actively integrate it" into her platform.

"My platform is forthcoming and will be released in the very near future," Santos said.

Santos' second term as senator will end in January 2023. She also served two terms as a member of the House of Representatives.

Igitol said Mesngon is seeking election for mayor of Rota as an independent as well.

Mesngon is currently a Head Start teacher. She previously served as director of Rota's Community and Cultural Affairs.

Igitol said Cabrera filed his candidacy for a Precinct 5 seat in the House of Representatives as an independent. Cabrera is chairman of the Friends of the Monument.

Igitol said Mendiola filed his candidacy for Saipan Municipal Council.

Back in 2018, Mendiola filed his candidacy as an independent candidate for Precinct 5 of the House. The CEC, however, informed him that he did not meet the residency requirements at that time. Mendiola then submitted a letter to CEC, informing them about his withdrawal as a candidate. He said he respects the requirements of election laws.

Aug. 10, 2022 is the last day to file candidacies and submit nominating petitions. Yesterday was also the last day to establish residency requirements.

CNMI starts works on intermodal transportation plan

The CNMI government has entered into an agreement with a professional engineering services firm, WSP USA, for multiple studies and reports regarding intermodal transportation within the CNMI.

Intermodal transportation refers to a combination of two or more different modes of transportation, such as transportation by air and transportation by sea. WSP's studies and reports will provide CNMI agencies such as the Commonwealth Ports Authority with an assessment of the current state of intermodal transportation within the CNMI and recommendations regarding the enhancement of CNMI infrastructure to facilitate the more efficient transportation of goods and services. These assessments and recommendations will be incorporated into an interagency strategic long-range intermodal transportation plan that will help guide local CNMI agencies' collaborative efforts to improve transportation within the CNMI.

"The intermodal study that is being undertaken will provide CNMI agencies with information that will be useful in determining future project priorities," said the CPA executive director Christopher S. Tenorio. "The plan will help CNMI agencies eliminate inefficiencies in the transportation of goods and services, which will, in turn, lead to lower freight costs and lower consumer prices."

Specifically, the project will produce a CPA Strategic Long-Rang Intermodal Transportation Plan (Intermodal Transportation Plan) composed of infrastructure condition assessment, adjacent CNMI utilities and infrastructure summary, surface transportation evaluation, financial analysis model and report, cargo analysis summary and tariff analysis summary to support identifying a priority list of future improvement projects. A public-private partnership white paper will also be created to identify options to consider for the improvement projects.

"The development of the Intermodal Transportation Plan demonstrates the CNMI's collaborative interagency approach to enhancing transportation on island," said Tenorio. "I'd like to provide a special thanks to Ms. Glenna Sakisat Palacios of the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs, who was instrumental in engaging this contractor on behalf of and for the benefit of the entire CNMI."

The study and development of the report are ongoing. WSP is currently collecting information from various CNMI agencies and stakeholders to form its initial assessment of intermodal transportation within the CNMI. ***(CPA)***

CUC UPDATES

Water service interruption in Gualo Rai on July 14

There will be an emergency water service interruption for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the areas of Gualo Rai (MacArthur Drive, Gualo Rai Road, Historia Earhart Drive, Isley Place, Rai Drive and Espana Street) on Thursday, July 14, 2022, from 8:30am to 4pm.

This is due to a possible 6-inch mainline leak located on MacArthur Drive near the Gualo Rai reservoir. Customers should expect restoration of water services soon after the repairs.

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

Water service interruption in Upper and South San Vicente, Upper Dandan Homestead, Naftan Road and Obyan

There will be an emergency water service interruption for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the areas of Upper and South San Vicente, Upper Dandan Homestead, Naftan Road and Obyan on Friday, July 15, 2022, from 8:30am to 4pm.

This is due to a possible 6-inch mainline leak on Railroad Drive in San Vicente. Customers should expect restoration of water services soon after the repairs.

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.comlCommonwealthUtilitiesCorporationl). ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Youth Congress session on Saturday

the 18th CNMI Youth Congress will convene its First Day, 8th Regular Session on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at 11am in the House of Representatives chamber. ***(PR)***

MVA office closure and relocation

Due to office relocation, the Marianas Visitors Authority office on Saipan remain closed to walk-in customers through Wednesday, July 13, 2022. Normal office hours will resume on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at the new office location on the first floor of Gold Beach Hotel on Beach Road in Garapan. For assistance, contact the office at info@mymarianas.com or 1 (670) 664-3200. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-22-034

PROVISION OF OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE POWER GENERATION PLANT SYSTEMS ON THE ISLAND OF TINIAN

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the provision of operations, maintenance, and management services for the Power Plant Systems on the Island of Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$200.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-22-034, Operations, Maintenance, and Management Services for The Power Plant Systems on the island of Tinian" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on July 28, 2022** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on July 8, 2022,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, at email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan at email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

CHRETIEN T. VOERG
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Available for Public Review & Comment
PY2022 Annual Action Plan
July 12, 2022

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) announces the availability for public review and comment, the Program Year 2022 Annual Action Plan (AAP).

The AAP is mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development, for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds received by NMHC. NMHC is the Grantee of these HUD funds. NMHC administers CDBG, HOME, HTF, and ESG programs on behalf of the CNMI.

The PY2022 AAP identifies NMHC's proposed use of HUD PY2022 CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HTF funds totaling $1,781,697 for the third year of the ConPlan cycle. A detailed list of the proposed projects and activities are shown below.

Community Development Block Grant	**Project Sponsor**	**Project Type**	**Amount**
Demolition of Perilous Structures (Tinian) (Deemed unsafe and beyond repairable due to Super Typhoon Yutu)- Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission, Tinian Municipal Council Building, Tinian Public Market	Office of the Mayor of Tinian	Clearance/Demolition	$205,000.00
Renovation of Tinian's Little League Baseball Field	Office of the Mayor of Tinian	Public Facility	$330,000.00
Purchase of (2) Rescue Watercrafts and (2) All-Terrain Vehicles for the CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS)	Public Service	$106,000.00
Purchase of (2) Units of Rescue Equipment for Extrication Purposes	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS)	Public Facility	$143,100.00
CDBG Planning and Administrative Costs	NMHC	Program Administration	$196,025.00
Total			**$980,425.00**
Emergency Solutions Grant	**Project Sponsor**	**Project Type**	**Amount**
Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Assistance/ Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services	NMHC	Homeless Prevention/ Rapid Rehousing	$66,375.55
ESG Administrative Cost	NMHC	Program Administration	$6,030.45
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	NMHC	HMIS	$8,000.00
Total			**$80,406.00**
HOME Investment Partnership Grant	**Project Sponsor**	**Project Type**	**Amount**
HOME Rehabilitation Program	NMHC	Affordable Housing	$188,165.65
HOME New Construction Program	NMHC	Affordable Housing	$250,000.00
HOME Planning and Administrative Costs	NMHC	Program Administration	$77,323.35
Total			**$ 515,489.00**
Housing Trust Fund	**Project Sponsor**	**Project Type**	**Amount**
To rehabilitate up to (2) NMHC Foreclosed Units and to convert to a rental unit for an extremely low- income household	NMHC will identify a non-profit organization to administer the program	Rehabilitation of a Rental Unit	$200,677.00
HTF Planning and Administrative Costs	NMHC	Program Administration	$5,000.00
Total			**$205,677.00**

The AAP will be available electronically on NMHC's website at www.nmhcgov.net. If you would like to obtain a copy or require additional information please contact Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director at 234-6866 or by email at deputydirector@nmhcgov.net.

NMHC is inviting the public to comment on the proposed AAP. NMHC supports pandemic safety protocols and current mandated social distancing requirements. Public hearings will be held on Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Locations are as follows:

1) Saipan: NMHC Conference Room, Main Office, Garapan
2) Tinian: NMHC Field Office, San Jose Village, NMC Campus
3) Rota: NMHC Field Office, Sinapalo Village

Any person(s), agency, or organization wishing to comment on the AAP are encouraged to do so by submitting written comments to the NMHC main office at Garapan, Saipan, and/or to the Rota and Tinian Field Offices, no later than 4:30 pm Thursday, August 11, 2022. Written comments may also be submitted via facsimile at (670)234-9021 or by submitting via email to deputydirector@nmhcgov.net. Should you require special accommodations, please contact Ms. Mafnas, at the NMHC main office, at 670-234-6866.

Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director
This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD CPD funds

9th MSC command team celebrates July 4 in Guam, Saipan

By CAPT. PHILIP REGINA
9TH MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND

The 9th Mission Support Command is the most geographically dispersed command in the Army Reserve, with Army Reserve centers strategically located throughout the Pacific. These centers provide a forward Army presence in isolated Pacific island communities such as Guam, Saipan, and American Samoa.

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman and Command Sgt. Maj. Corey Thompson, the commander and command sergeant major of the 9th MSC, spent Fourth of July weekend in Guam and Saipan among Army Reserve soldiers and local government leaders, celebrating the holiday and discussing important issues within these communities.

The CNMI celebrates America's independence as well as "Liberation Day" on July 4. Liberation Day is celebrated annually to mark the permanent closure of civilian internment camps on July 4, 1946, following World War II.

"The community here [on] Saipan asked the 9th MSC to be a part of the Fourth of July parade," said Thompson. "It was awesome to see our citizen soldiers, who are also a part of the local community here, be a part of this very special event."

"The 9th MSC is the anchor for U.S. Army Pacific in locations like Guam, Saipan, and American Samoa. Our Army Reserve Centers provide permanent Army presence on these islands," said Siekman.

"These Army Reserve centers also provide significant economic benefit to these communities, providing jobs and income for the Soldiers located here," added Siekman.

For Siekman, understanding the relationship between the Army Reserve and these communities is of the utmost importance.

"Because of the important role the Army Reserve plays in these communities, it is important to have regular meetings with local government leaders," said Siekman. "We understand the importance of maintaining relationships and we are especially interested in ways in which the 9th MSC can best integrate Army Reserve capabilities to address issues affecting these communities."

HAPPY LIBERATION DAY
Honoring our legacy as we ride the waves of change
JUNE 30 - JULY 4, 2022
BRIDGE CAPITAL
F&S Corporation
KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MLJ Development and Investment Corporation
DIAMOND WATER

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, center, Command Sgt. Maj. Corey Thompson, left, the commanding general and command sergeant major of the 9th Mission Support Command, and 1st Lt. Naomi Pomele, aide-de-camp pose for a photo with Saipan law enforcement during Saipan's Liberation Day parade at Saipan July 4.
CAPT. PHILIP REGINA

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, center, the commanding general for the 9th Mission Support Command, Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii, and Command Sgt. Maj. Corey Thompson, right, the 9th MSC's command sergeant major, meets with Harry Blanco, CNMI Field Representative under the Office of Insular Affairs on July 5, 2022.
CAPT. PHILIP REGINA

For Thompson, the visit was both novel and informative.

"I only recently joined the 9th MSC team and this was my first time in Guam and [on] Saipan," said Thompson. "As I met members of the local community, I was surprised by the amount of people who are current or former members of the 9th MSC. Government officials, community leaders and business owners, many of these individuals have ties to the command."

Siekman, Apatang talk about future of Army Reserve on Saipan, CNMI

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, left, the commanding general for the 9th Mission Support Command, Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii, has talks with Saipan Mayor David Apatang, center, in a conference room at the mayor's office in San Jose, Saipan, July 5, 2022.
CAPT. PHILIP REGINA

Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, the commanding general for the 9th Mission Support Command of the U.S. Pacific U.S. Army Reserve and his team met with Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang in the mayor's office conference a day after the 2022 Fourth of July Liberation Day parade, which drew hundreds of residents and visitors to line up along Beach Road to enjoy the parade.

"Thank you, mayor, for inviting us to be a part of your annual celebration, an important moment in the history of the CNMI," said Siekman. "The Reserve wants to increase its presence and capacity in the CNMI, and I am here to hear from you what you think the Reserve can add to its presence here."

Apatang said he was pleased and happy that the Reserve participated in this year's parade, along with other military units. He said this was the first time the Reserve joined the parade since he became the mayor of Saipan.

He said the Reserve's "excellent job of keeping the Reserve [on] Saipan ready and engaged in the community needs to be highlighted. For example, the Reserves quickly responded to the CNMI's effort to get the island of Saipan back on its feet immediately after Super Typhoon Yutu struck the island," said the mayor. "Recruiting is important and I want to encourage the Reserve to continue its successful recruiting program here in the CNMI."

Siekman emphasized the Reserve program of offering recruits scholarships to take college courses and career programs that will help them to be successful in their chosen career paths. He indicated that he wants to boost the local capacity of the CNMI in other fields such as engineering.

Apatang assured Siekman that he would continue to coordinate and work alongside the Reserve in Saipan and support all active reservists living on the island. ***(PR)***

Stiles takes command of OICC Marine Corps Marianas

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE,—Capt. Robert Stiles relieved Capt. Steven Stasick as the commanding officer of Officer in Charge of Construction Marine Corps Marianas during a change of command ceremony at Andersen Air Force Base last July 8.

Rear Adm. Dean VanderLey, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific commander, presided over the ceremony and congratulated Stasick for accomplishments during his time with OICC MCM.

"One of the things I really appreciated about Steve was that his focus wasn't only on the task at hand but looking ahead at certain things such as workforce growth, process improvements, and partnerships within the community," said VanderLey. "The work you have done, Steve, has really set Capt. Stiles and the team up for success."

Stasick assumed command of OICC MCM in 2020 and was recognized for leading the team in breaking ground of 22 facilities, and completing $890 million in construction of 39 active projects valued at $3.3 billion at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz.

"This has been the most challenging job I've ever had, but it's been the most rewarding job I've had," said Stasick. "As you know the last few years have been tricky with COVID and logistics among other things, but we continued to work closely with our partners to maintain our timelines and keep projects on track, and I could not be more proud of these relationships."

VanderLey presented Stasick with the Legion of Merit and applauded his efforts in supporting the defense policy review initiative and relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam. The initiative drove the transformation of 563 acres of jungle into a fully developed site for the first permanent Marine Corps Base newly constructed in more than 60 years.

Stasick recognized his team for their hard work and dedication to fulfilling the mission, while ensuring projects remained on schedule and within budget despite challenges.

"We've experienced COVID delays, H-2B visa delays, and logistical manufacturing delays, but with hard work and creativity we kept construction on track," said Stasick. "The next few years are going to be an exciting ride and I couldn't be more proud of the team we have, and Capt. Stiles is the perfect leader to take the command to the next level."

Stasick reports to NAVFAC Pacific in Hawaii as the vice commander.

Stiles reports to OICC MCM after serving as the commanding officer of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1.

"Steve, thanks to your leadership, you're turning over a highly motivated organization and I thank you for that, and I look forward to continuing to, in many cases literally, to build on the foundation you established," said Stiles. "I couldn't be more thrilled to be here to develop relationships with the community and the people of Guam, to partner with our local and international contractors, to meet and work with each and every one you, and ultimately to build Marine Corps Marianas." ***(USN)***

500 Sails offers new sailing class this July

500 Sails has opened registration to its latest Lalayak class. Lalayak is 500 Sails' introductory program devoted to teaching island residents to sail Chamorro canoes. All training sessions are free and take place at the 500 Sails Guma Sakman at Civic Center in Susupe. Youth 12 years old and and up must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

The Lalayak program consists of four consecutive training sessions scheduled as follows:

LAND SESSIONS:

■ Saturday, July 30, 2022: 9:30am - 3:30pm

■ Sunday, July 31, 2022: 12pm - 6pm

OCEAN SESSIONS:

■ Saturday, Aug. 6, 2022: 10am - 6pm

■ Sunday, Aug. 7, 2022: 10:30am - 6pm

Land sessions teach historic context, canoe design, sailing vocabulary, knots, points of sail, true and apparent wind, sail trim, steering, rules of the road, safety, traditions and protocol, log entries, hazards of navigation, and more, in a classroom setting.

Ocean sessions are on the beach and within the lagoon. Training includes canoe rigging, launching, sailing practice, man-overboard practice, capsize and recovery practice, and post-sailing cleanup and putting away canoes. Students crew and sail 26-foot canoes together, with guidance from experienced sailors.

Prerequisites and registration

Registrants must pass two swim tests to qualify for the Lalayak program. The first swim test is an untimed, nonstop 300-meter swim from the Guma Sakman to the first lagoon tank and back. Students may use any stroke they are comfortable with during the test, as long as they keep moving and do not touch the bottom. The second test requires that the students tread water for 60 minutes (as a group). The tests are scheduled on July 26 at 5pm or July 28 at 5pm at the Guma Sakman.

Don't let the treading water test scare you! Ninety-nine percent of students are successful. Many master treading water during the test. Coaches and lifeguards will be there to help you.

Students who pass the swim tests are automatically registered.

For more information contact Andrew Roberto, director of Community Programs, at 670-323-7245 (SAIL), aroberto@500sails.org, or message via Facebook or Instagram.

500 Sails is a 501(c)(3) and CNMI tax-exempt nonprofit organization dedicated to reviving, promoting, and preserving the maritime cultural traditions of the Mariana Islands through community engagement in canoe cultural values and activities. 500 Sails' vision is a healthy thriving native community that has successfully integrated traditional cultural values into modern life. Major supporting partners include the CNMI Office of Indigenous Affairs, IT&E, and the Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc - Canoe Federation. ***(PR)***

NMC to host third info session on Friday

Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free information session on Friday, July 15, at NMC's Olympio T. Borja Library in Building O. The info session will be held from 5:30pm to 6:30pm.

The session will cover topics that include financial aid options and admissions. Participants of the info session will also qualify to have their application and placement test fees waived for NMC's upcoming fall 2022 semester, a saving of about $75.

NMC offers several degree and certificate programs, including a bachelor of science in education (concentration in early childhood education, elementary education, rehabilitation and human services, or special education), bachelor of science in business management (concentration in accounting or without concentration); associate of arts in business, associate of applied science in business administration (emphasis in accounting, business management, or computer applications), associate of applied science in hospitality management, associate of arts in liberal arts (emphasis in education, health and physical education, pre-engineering, social work, or without emphasis), associate of science in nursing, associate of science in agriculture, associate of science in natural resource management, associate of applied science in criminal justice, and associate of science in fire science technology. The certificate programs at NMC include Basic Law Enforcement, Business Management, Computer Applications, Early Childhood Education, Fire Science Technology, Hospitality Operations, Nursing Assistant, and Small Business Management.

The first day of classes for NMC's fall 2022 semester is Aug. 15, 2022. A list of the classes that are offered can be found at www.marianas.edu. For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 237-6769/70/71/72 or email oar@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

NMC to host FAFSA workshop on July 13

Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free financial aid workshop for interested community members and students looking to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The workshop will be held at the Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library on July 13, 2022, from 9am to 11am.

For the upcoming academic year, students will be able to avail of up to $6,895 in federal financial aid. NMC encourages all college students to take advantage of the opportunity before the application deadline on August 1, 2022.

Workshop participants can also have their scholarship documents and other paperwork photocopied free of charge. Participants will also qualify to have their NMC application fee and placement test fees waived.

Participants are encouraged to bring documents such as valid identification (passport or birth certificate), copies of their high school diploma, copies of official transcripts, and tax return information for the years 2020 and 2021.

NMC will also be hosting additional workshops on the following dates:

■ July 20, 1pm – 3pm

■ July 26, 9:00am – 11am and 4pm – 6pm

■ July 28, 10am – 12pm and 4pm – 6pm

For more information contact the Financial Aid Office at fao@marianas.eduor at 237-6791/2/3/4. ***(NMC)***

NMPASI
NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

POSITION: FISCAL OFFICER
PAY-LEVEL: P.L. 28 / STEP 1-10 ($40,017 – $62,080)
REPORTS TO: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION:

This is an exempt professional position responsible for the management of office/program fiscal systems including but not limited to all accounts receivables and program expenditures. The Fiscal Officer is selected by and reports to the Executive Director and works under limited supervision within prescribed standards, policies and procedures.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

✓ Bachelor's Degree (B.A. and/or B.S.) in a field related to work of this position or no less than 120 credit hours from an accredited post-secondary school in areas related to the work of this position;

✓ No less than four (4) years of experience that demonstrates a thorough understanding of federal and/or state grants management systems and any applicable policies, laws and other relevant regulations; and

✓ No less than four (4) years of experience that demonstrates a thorough understanding of accounting and/or auditing concepts as they apply to state and federal government funds.

HOW TO APPLY:
Interested applicants may pick up a complete job description and application forms at the NMPASI office located on middle road approximately 100 yards north of the Gualo Rai traffic light intersection. Completed application must be submitted to the Executive Director at the NMPASI Office. In order for applications to be considered they must include (1) a **Cover Letter** (2) a **Resume**' and (3) **Completed Application forms.** Incomplete Application and/or applications which do not demonstrate that the applicant meets the minimum qualifications as listed above or do no meet the deadline for submittal do not meet will not be considered. For further information, please feel free to contact **Mr. Gregory Borja at (670) 235-7273/4 (Voice)/ (670) 287-0652 (Message) or email at gborja@nmpasi.org. NMPASI is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.**

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION WILL BE ON AUGUST 12, 2022 AT 4PM

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP22-CHCC/THC-020

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:JULY 25th, 2022 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

Design Services for Tinian Health Center (THC) Generator Replacement

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on *Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 8am* on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (05/17/2022)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
  A. Senate Confirmation & Swearing-In of Ted Parker and Dr. Tiffany Willis as Member Boards
  B. Nomination of Dr. Angela Sabino to the Board Representing Dental
  C. DEA Memorandum of Agreement for P. B.
  D. PA DEA certificates
VII. Director's Report
  A. Financial Report for 2nd Quarter
  B. Practice Quarterly Report for Dr. NK
  C. Status Update on the Physician Regulation
  D. Request to Purchase New Vehicle for Office Use
  E. HCPLB New Website http://www.cnmilicensing.com
    Office email Address: info@cnmilicensing.gov.mp
  F. Continuing Dental Education Courses in Saipan
VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  A. Governor's Office
  B. Legislature
X. Old Business
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
  A. New Application
  B. Renewal Application
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
  A. Next Meeting Date
  B. Adjournment of Meeting

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB22-COTA/FTA-42200120

SUBMISSION DATE: July 28, 2022 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"Purchase and Delivery of Four (4) 8-Passenger High Roof ADA Mobility Equipped Electric Transit Vans with One (1) Wheel Chair Position for the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY AT MRS. ALFREDA C. MARATITA **VIA EMAIL ONLY** TO alfredac.maratita@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, 04:30 P.M., LOCAL TIME, JULY 15, 2022**. ALL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL POTENTIAL BIDDERS. ***QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.***

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT; BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALFREDA C. MARATITA
S/A FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Good toddlers with guns: The craziness of the gun nuts

After his parents were cut down by a maniac in Highland Park, Illinois, Monday, 2-year-old Aiden McCarthy was found bloodied, lying under his father's body. He was rescued and eventually delivered into the loving arms of his grandparents.

We do not wish to speak ill of the dead, but why didn't mom and dad, Irina and Kevin McCarthy, teach their toddler to arm himself and stop the slaughter? Or why didn't they keep their hands free to reach for a concealed firearm, Hollywood style, and take dead aim at the shooter? After all, we're repeatedly told by the gun lobby that the only answer to bad guys with guns is good guys with guns.

Nothing explodes that dangerous myth better than seven people being murdered and nearly 50 wounded by a man perched on a rooftop, firing more than 70 rounds from a military-style rifle he obtained legally despite having told his family in 2019 he wanted to "kill everyone." Statistics already confirm that the chances a gun owner will wield a weapon to defend himself in a crime is vanishingly small; the chances the same weapon will wind up hurting or killing a fellow good guy (or child), far larger.

But imagine dozens or, in the wake of the Supreme Court's disastrous ruling inventing individuals' constitutional right to carry a concealed firearm in public, hundreds of good guys in the parade crowd when shots ring out. Imagine they unholster their weapons and scan the frantic stampede, seeking to determine the source of the firing. We now have scores of individuals in plain clothes pointing and perhaps discharging weapons at what they believe to be a bad guy.

This is a recipe for chaos, confusion and death.

Indeed, there were plenty of trained, uniformed good guys with guns—police officers—present when the killer unleashed hell. They couldn't stop him from orphaning Aiden McCarthy. Neither would a crowd of self-styled action heroes. The only sane answer is to prevent would-be villains from getting killing machines in the first place.

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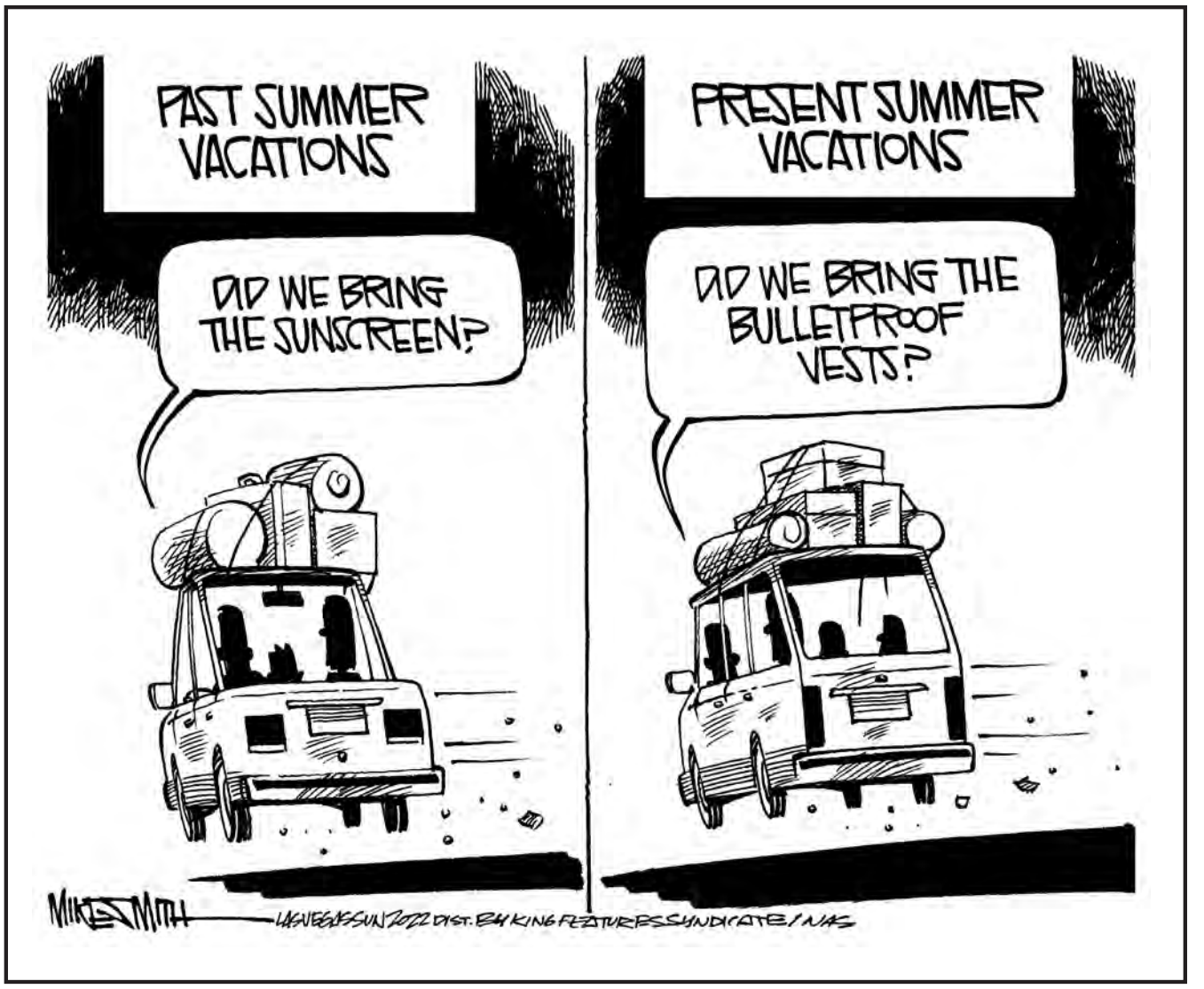
PAST SUMMER VACATIONS
DID WE BRING THE SUNSCREEN?
PRESENT SUMMER VACATIONS
DID WE BRING THE BULLETPROOF VESTS?
MIKE SMITH
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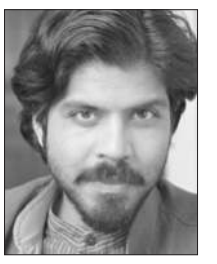
Ukraine shouldn't overplay its hand with allies

By PANKAJ MISHRA
Bloomberg Opinion



Pankaj Mishra is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist. He is author, most recently, of* Run and Hide.

Until his ignominious fall this week, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson could count on unstinting support from at least one quarter: Ukraine. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy claimed to be "very happy" last month when a flailing Johnson won, narrowly, a vote of no-confidence in his leadership of the Tory party.

Only this week Johnson was dialing the Ukrainian leader's phone number after being caught lying about his promotion of a serial groper — the scandal that finally brought him down. Indeed, strategically timed conversations with Zelenskyy had become Johnson's preferred distraction from his scandal-battered government in recent weeks.

It is not clear what was discussed in these numerous conversations. As the columnist Simon Jenkins wrote, "All we know is that on almost every occasion, Johnson conjures from the air another tranche of British taxpayers' money in aid for Ukraine."

In Germany, Ukrainian Ambassador Andrij Melnyk has made much stronger interventions in local politics through his tweets and talk show appearances. Comparing German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to a "liverwurst," he has tried to mock and berate Berlin into taking a more activist stance on Ukraine.

Taking sides in the domestic politics of its allies would seem an unwise strategy for Ukraine under any circumstances. It's doubly so now, when taxpayers in Western Europe and the United States risk tiring of spending money to support a war where victory seems increasingly elusive.

The rapid Western political and media consensus on Ukraine, understandably, did not emerge from any extensive public debate or discussion. Rather, politicians and editorialists reveling in the newfound unity of the West counted upon popular feelings —spontaneous revulsion against Vladimir Putin's unprovoked assault on a sovereign country and people, and reflexive admiration for the courage shown by Ukrainians against a brutal and unscrupulous enemy.

But feelings and sentiments change much faster than the policies they help create. Western interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq are recent examples: Initially popular, they eventually helped Donald Trump's improbable rise to power as, in part, an anti-war candidate.

Such reversals occur because ordinary citizens don't, and can't, share the reasons why many politicians and journalists continue to strike combative postures long after they cease to be effective.

Politicians in democratic countries tend to find in war abroad a scope for bold maneuver and rhetoric unavailable to them at home: Last week US President Joe Biden briefly stood tall at the head of a seemingly rejuvenated NATO in Madrid before returning to his hopeless battles for gun control and abortion rights in Washington, D.C. Journalists and commentators in affluent societies—from Ernest Hemingway to Bernard Henri-Levy—have long been prone to seek moral seriousness (and self-promotion) in other people's wars.

People who don't belong to any political or media establishment lack such professional and ideological motivation. They are also more exposed to economic adversity and disposed to change their minds about forever-seeming wars.

As it happens, ordinary citizens were never adequately informed about the steep economic and military risks of a prolonged war against a nuclear and commodity superpower.

Western strategists and commentators highlighted Russia's military failures and economic frailty in the early stages of its assault on Ukraine. But they barely considered how, unlike the despots of North Korea and Iran targeted by Western sanctions, Putin was willing and able to unleash a global energy-and-food crisis in retaliation.

Nor did they foresee that, as China and India eagerly buy discounted Russian oil, and non-Western countries refuse to sanction Russia, the Kremlin's revenues would actually rise instead of falling.

The ruble is not exactly being reduced to "rubble," as Biden promised. Rather, every day now brings fresh fears of impending disasters in even highly developed economies. Russia's gas pipeline to Germany is due for routine servicing and closure next week. If, as seems likely, Putin doesn't turn the tap back on fully, Europe's strongest economy could plunge into a deep recession.

See UKRAINE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Politician's paradox

The definition of a politician is a person who is involved in the politics and activities associated with the proper and beneficial governance of a country, state, or any other governing area.

The paradox pertaining to a politician is that he or she may also act in a manipulative and scheming way to gain advancement and retain future membership in a governing organization.

A paradox is a seemingly absurd or contradictory statement or proposition that, when investigated, may prove to be well founded or true.

Therefore, as citizens of the CNMI we should examine the actions of our current politicians to see if he or she falls into the category of a politician's paradox. Do they use their office for the betterment of their constituents, which most likely guarantees their political advancement and re-election, or do they resort to manipulation and scheming attempts to gain popularity with the voters for re-election?

Please consider the following examples of political paradoxes with a open mind and I accept any criticism of my opinions and observations:

First on the list of paradoxical politicians is Gov. Ralph Torres, who has attempted to lead our islands through very difficult times and has spent many millions of federal dollars and traveled all over to spread the success of his work.

However, he has been widely accused of misspending public funds for himself and for his party's benefit, which is currently being litigated in court. For example, he has apparently ignored CNMI public law and flew all over in first/biz class instead of economy. The law could be amended to allow the governor's office to fly business class for long flights to eliminate debilitating jet lag, but hey, it's easier for the governor to have his assistants stamp "island okay" on his travel request.

In a case of "double political paradox," even the governor's accuser in the above court action, the CNMI attorney general, has flown n business class. The Attorney General's Office has stated he was given a complimentary upgrade, but the action of him being seated in business class would appear to unaware onlookers as a violation of the legal issue of an "appearance of impropriety" scenario.

Gov. Torres also shows concern for our NMI residents' welfare and economic well-being. But he has ignored his mandated duty, per P.L. 15-35, and failed to appoint qualified members to the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, which is a very important commission that regulates the public and private utilities and telecommunications of our islands.

Consequently, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has no oversight in its unregulated raising of our costly utility bills, and CUC blames this on that they are mandated to raise rates. But who actually mandates CUC and who really double-checks the mysterious calculations for the doubling of rates since January?

The big problem is that the CPUC has been non-existent for several years and there is NO excuse to not appoint CPUC members, except to possibly "control" CUC's operations via the governor's office.

It is appreciated that the Senate recently passed a resolution to ask CUC to give the struggling NMI residents a break on the rising utility costs (Fuel Adjustment Charge fees have doubled since January) and, furthermore, a legislative hearing was recently held to find solutions. But what is really needed is to have the governor pressured into legally appointing the necessary members to the CPUC and allow the CPUC to take care of justifiably regulating and controlling pricing and services for the CNMI people.

In early July, CUC raised its FAC 19% due to MOPS (Mean of Platts Singapore) calculations, when Mobil and Shell lowered their gas due to the ongoing global lowering of crude oil. So, what the FAC is going on? The CPUC is needed now!

Even telecommunication companies that fall under the purview of CPUC like IT&E and Docomo aren't currently being legally regulated by the CPUC.

Next on the paradox list is the Commonwealth Casino Commission that is also an NMI political organization with members appointed by the governor, and which is managed by an executive director.

According to Title 175 (Commonwealth Casino Commission Regulations), the CCC and its executive director have the responsibility to supervise, monitor, and investigate the Saipan's only casino, IPI, to ensure its business suitability and financial capabilities in order to protect the public's interests, i.e., fees and taxes to provide extra economic revenue to our government's treasury. This revenue in turn would provide more economic security for our health, education, retirement, and other needed CNMI programs.

However, it seems the CCC executive director is mainly concerned in collecting the exorbitant IPI annual fees to keep the costly CCC in business, instead of following the fiduciary mandates of Title 175 and support IPI's economic stability.

The CCC executive director keeps threatening IPI with the immediate revocation of its license without the CCC offering a casino backup plan or even giving IPI its due process. The CCC revocation plan was stopped by the federal court that basically said that IPI should have at least a chance to recover from the devastating effects of the pandemic, etc., and be allowed to secure funding that will pay any legitimate bills and complete its construction. As a constructive help to this situation, why doesn't the CCC and its executive director offer IPI some relief and waivers to reduce part of the $55 million fees owed the CCC.

IPI casino operations have been closed since the summer of 2020 and what has the CCC done in that time to warrant the whole $55 million?

A final note to some NMI residents and political leaders, who keep trashing IPI in various news articles and comments: I'm still waiting for any one of you to come up with an alternative and realistic tourist and business idea to replace the tourist casino industry.

When I drafted the original Saipan casino bill several years ago for the Saipan Northern Islands Delegation, I organized public hearings with SNILD members attending in all the Saipan villages, in order to gather valuable information for the future of the casino industry on Saipan. The recorded responses and input from the public was 90% in favor of the casino industry and to create better self-reliance for the CNMI, with of course the 10% usual critics complaining but offering no tourist or business alternatives.

Recently, Tinian is opening its new casino operations to its medical and scholarship resources for its residents. Saipan and Rota are allocating still existing IPI casino fees for needed programs and scholarship funding. So where are the complaints about these actions?

The remaining political paradoxes involve the two new gubernatorial election teams who will challenge Gov. Torres this coming November.

The first tandem of gubernatorial challengers is the team of Reps. Tina Sablan and Leila Staffler, who are both young and intelligent.

However, in reviewing their legislative records I fail to see a constructive platform of business-related activities for the betterment of the CNMI. It's good to wave the flag for more social programs and gender equality programs, but these added programs could be costly and where are the sources of revenue to pay for these programs?

Regarding gender equality in the CNMI, I've lived here for over 40 years and have witnessed the overall island acceptance by the vast majority of local people and the tolerant island culture in regards to people of different colors, beliefs, and gender selections.

Over the years, there have been numerous government employees and private sector members on our islands who embrace different ethnicities and gender identities without denial of opportunities or danger to them. Haven't you ever seen or heard of the popular and annual gay and cross-dressing events on Saipan?

Frankly, the NMI doesn't need similar U.S. mainland government-type interference and potentially costly laws and regulations to guarantee gender equality here.

There's also one other issue that bothers me about Rep. Sablan in regards to the retirement bonus saga.

After the delaying tactics by the Legislature over who gets the credit for helping the *man'amko* retirees, who some years ago had their COLAs ironically removed by legislative action, Rep. Sablan, according to the legislative records, didn't join several House members who signed House Bill 22-95-SS1 to finally approve the bonus. This apparent lack of retiree support, along with her adamant proclamation to have IPI's casino license revoked immediately, whereby the hospital, schools and the retirees will suffer from the lack of extra government revenues, has me worried about the plans of the Democratic Party. As added information, Rep. Staffler did vote for House Bill No, 22-95, SS1.

Last, but not least of gubernatorial challengers, is the tandem of Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios and Mayor David Apatang, who fall into the category of elder statesmen who can still ably govern with the well-being of the NMI people in mind, young and old.

However, Lt. Gov. Palacios did commit a "grievous" offense for flying in business class one way from Saipan to Guam some years ago--personally I really can't tell the difference between economy class and biz class on the short flight to Guam.

He is also guilty of being elected to a position that really has no power or duties in the governor's office. All the special assistants and staff in the governor's office are hired and appointed by the governor and answer to the governor and his policies. Except on occasion when the governor leaves the CNMI after all important gubernatorial actions have been already accomplished, and the lieutenant governor fills in as acting governor for a while and signs a proclamation or two and poses for few photo-ops.

As for "Sergeant" Mayor Apatang, after he honorably served in the U.S. military and the NMI Legislature and has currently done a good job as mayor, it's rumored that the usual Saipan complainers have adamantly supported removing Mayor Apatang from office for wasting public funds by planting too many flowers around our island.

Apparently, flowers make the complainers sneeze or sprain their brain cells trying to complain about something nice for once.

Well, good luck to all the November candidates. *Biba*, CNMI!

Dr. Jack Angello
Navy Hill, Saipan

UKRAINE

From Page 8

Amid mass unemployment, public sympathy in Germany for Melnyk, Ukraine's sharp-tongued diplomat, will dwindle. Zelenskyy, too, is in danger of losing some of his enormous moral capital in the UK after his unstinting support for Johnson.

Certainly, public opinion in Europe is already shifting fast as record-high inflation fuels fears of a devastating economic crisis. According to an opinion poll conducted in 10 European countries by the European Council on Foreign Relations last month, those who want the war to end as soon as possible outnumber those who seek to punish Russia.

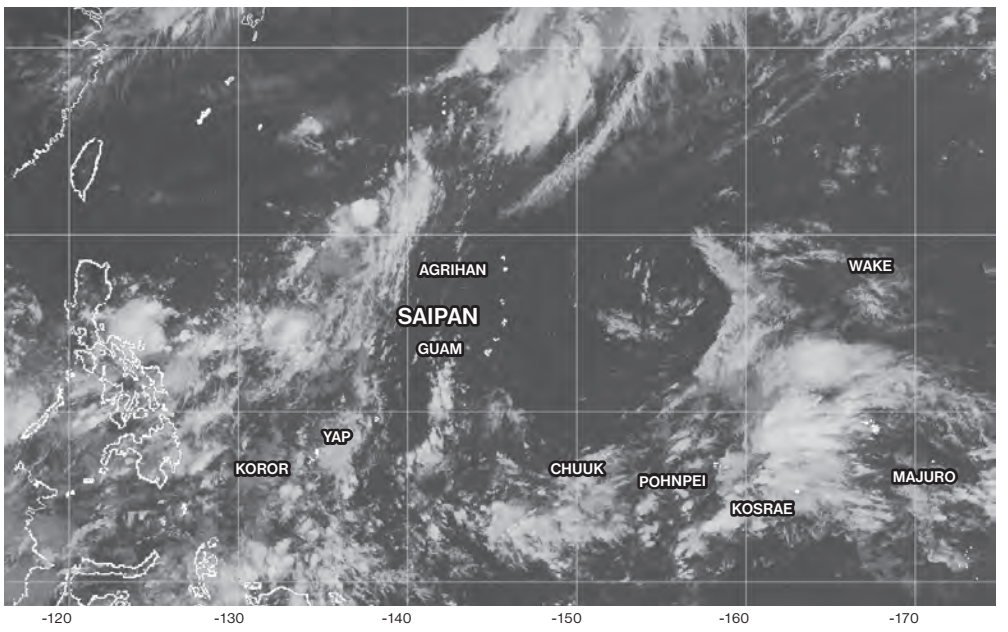
That majority in the West is very likely to grow; it could even become indifferent to the fate of Ukrainians as the economic outlook worsens. Abandoning Ukrainians to their ruthless persecutor would be as much a disgrace as abandoning Afghans to the Taliban was. Yet we must prepare ourselves for the grim possibility that another hasty and ill-conceived intervention backed by political and media elites will become a messy failure, hurting the very people it was supposed to help.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny.	Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny.	A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy.	A chance of showers. Partly sunny.	Mostly sunny.
88° 76°	87° 76°	86° 78°	84° 78°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:27 AM, MONDAY, JULY 11, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak surface trough is currently over the Marianas region with a few passing showers seen on the radar. A few lightning strikes were observed around the coastal waters overnight. Buoys at at Ritidian and Tanapag are reporting about 3 feet combined seas, and art Ipan around 4 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 74°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:45 AM	5:23 PM
Wednesday	-	4:49 AM	6:31 PM
Thursday	-	5:58 AM	7:34 PM
Friday	-	7:06 AM	8:30 PM
Saturday	-	8:12 AM	9:20 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain/Wind	61° / 55°
Beijing	Rain	75° / 70°
Hong Kong	Sunny	89° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 73°
London	Cloudy	52° / 50°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	81° / 62°
Manila	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Light Rain	52° / 43°
Miami	Thunderstorms	84° / 70°
New York	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Osaka	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	92° / 68°
Busan	Light Rain	83° / 75°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	90° / 69°
Salem	Thunderstorms	86° / 72°
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 57°
Seoul	Showers	88° / 74°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	85° / 74°
Washington, DC	Sunny	85° / 69°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:51 AM	High Tide	2.18
12:27 PM	Low Tide	-0.37
7:51 PM	High Tide	2.11
-	-	-

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	6:30PM	7:15PM	6

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	8:00AM	Daily
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	4, 6
RS112	3:45PM	7:30PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	3, 7
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
UA112	4:40PM	5:30PM	6

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:00PM	4:00AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1,2,3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	4, 6, 7
RS111	8:45AM	2:05PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
7C3406	8:50AM	2:30PM	3
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 6, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6
TW9307	9:15AM	2:30PM	3

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX621	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

US labor shortage provides opportunity for ex-prisoners

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—When Antonio McGowan left the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman after serving 17 years, he was free for the first time since he was 15. But as an adult finally out from behind bars, he immediately found himself confined to menial labor.

McGowan needed stable work, for a paycheck and to keep busy, but temporary gigs were all he could find. Just as those around him counseled the importance of maintaining a routine, he became trapped in a cycle of odd jobs and irregular hours. He trimmed grass one week and painted a house the next. But he couldn't land anything full time, and the unpredictability of his income proved challenging. Disconnection notices and unpaid bills piled up.

"Things weren't in place," McGowan said. "They weren't where I wanted them to be as far as being an individual back in society. It was a struggle."

After several years adrift, McGowan was finally able to regain his footing with the help of the Hinds County Reentry Program, a workforce training program for former inmates created in October. Reentry programs are one way employers are trying to fill some of the 11.3 million open jobs in the U.S. amid a dire national labor shortage. The practice of employing people with a criminal record is known as "second-chance hiring."

In rosier economic times, many former prisoners faced steep obstacles to finding work. The labor shortage sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic now presents them with opportunities, said Eric Beamon, a recruiter for MagCor, a company that provides job training to people in Mississippi correctional facilities.

"We think the pandemic, in a sense, was a big help," Beamon said. "If no one wants to work anymore or if everyone wants to work from home, employers are begging for employees."

AP

Incarcerated at 15, Jackson, Miss., resident Antonio McGowan, Wednesday, June 29, 2022, says he had limited prospects coming out of prison after being released in 2014. However, McGowan later enrolled in the Hinds County Reentry Program, which provides workforce training for formerly incarcerated people, which led to a work-based learning program at Hinds Community College, which placed him in a job that is giving him maintenance training in heating and air conditioning, while employed.

Some studies have shown that stable jobs are a major factor in reducing recidivism. Still, not everyone is willing to hire an ex-convict, and a lack of job opportunities for those with a criminal record is still stymieing workforce participation in the economy, Stephanie Ferguson, a senior manager of employment policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, wrote in a May report.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, barriers faced by people with felony convictions were linked to a loss of at least 1.7 million employees from the workforce and a cost of at least $78 billion to the economy in 2014, the year that McGowan left prison.

The current desperate straits in which employers now find themselves could help spur a change. In a 2021 survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management, or SHRM; the SHRM Foundation and the Charles Koch Institute, 53% of human resource professionals said they would be willing to hire people with criminal records—up from just 37% in 2018.

That's where programs like Hinds County Reentry and MagCor step in, helping to make former inmates more desirable as candidates by properly training them to reintegrate into society and matching them with jobs tailored to their skills and interests.

McGowan said he'd like to work in air conditioning and heating repair, and the program's staff members recommended him to Upchurch Services, a Mississippi-based company that allows workers to take classes in repair services while gaining experience in the field. McGowan was hired the second week of May.

Report: Uber lobbied, used 'stealth' tech to block scrutiny

WASHINGTON (AP)—As Uber aggressively pushed into markets around the world, the ride-sharing service lobbied political leaders to relax labor and taxi laws, used a "kill switch" to thwart regulators and law enforcement, channeled money through Bermuda and other tax havens and considered portraying violence against its drivers as a way to gain public sympathy, according to a report released Sunday.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, a nonprofit network of investigative reporters, scoured internal Uber texts, emails, invoices and other documents to deliver what it called "an unprecedented look into the ways Uber defied taxi laws and upended workers' rights."

The documents were first leaked to the Brtiish newspaper The Guardian, which shared them with the consortium.

In a written statement. Uber spokesperson Jill Hazelbaker acknowledged "mistakes" in the past and said CEO Dara Khosrowshahi, hired in 2017, had been "tasked with transforming every aspect of how Uber operates ... When we say Uber is a different company today, we mean it literally: 90% of current Uber employees joined after Dara became CEO."

Founded in 2009, Uber sought to skirt taxi regulations and offer inexpensive transportation via a ride-sharing app. The consortium's Uber Files revealed the extraordinary lengths that the company undertook to establish itself in nearly 30 countries.

The company's lobbyists—including former aides to President Barack Obama—pressed government officials to drop their investigations, rewrite labor and taxi laws and relax background checks on drivers, the papers show.

The investigation found that Uber used "stealth technology" to fend off government investigations. The company, for example, used a "kill switch" that cut access to Uber servers and blocked authorities from grabbing evidence during raids in at least six countries. During a police raid in Amsterdam, the Uber Files reported, former Uber CEO Travis Kalanick personally issued an order: "Please hit the kill switch ASAP ... Access must be shut down in AMS (Amsterdam)."

The consortium also reported that Kalanick saw the threat of violence against Uber drivers in France by aggrieved taxi drivers as a way to gain public support. "Violence guarantee(s) success," Kalanick texted colleagues.

Canada telecom execs summoned after wide service outage

TORONTO (AP) — The federal industry minister said Sunday he is summoning telecom executives following an outage at Rogers Communications Inc. that disrupted mobile and Internet services across Canada, hampering several crucial services.

In a statement, Francois-Philippe Champagne said he would meet with Tony Staffieri, Rogers' chief executive officer, and other telecom leaders to discuss improving ``the reliability of networks across Canada." He called the failure "unacceptable."

The widespread disruption, which began Friday morning and lasted at least 15 hours, paralyzed communications across sectors including health care, law enforcement and the financial industry. Many 911 services couldn't receive incoming calls, several hospitals reported services affected, and debit card transactions were paused.

Staffieri released a statement Saturday apologizing for the outage.

"We know how much our customers rely on our networks and I sincerely apologize," he said. "We're particularly troubled that some customers could not reach emergency services and we are addressing the issue as an urgent priority."

Staffieri said services had been restored and were close to fully operational.

"We now believe we've narrowed the cause to a network system failure following a maintenance update in our core network, which caused some of our routers to malfunction early Friday morning," Staffieri said.

Many customers continued reporting service disruptions into Sunday.

Rogers issued a statement Sunday saying it was aware that some customers were continuing to experience "intermittent challenges with their services."

Average US gasoline price falls 19 cents to $4.86 per gallon

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline plunged 19 cents over the past two weeks to $4.86 per gallon.

Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey said Sunday that the continued decline comes as crude oil costs also fall.

"Assuming oil prices do not shoot up from here, motorists may see prices drop another 10-20 cents as the oil price cuts continue making their way to street level," Lundberg said in a statement.

The average price at the pump is down 24 cents over the past month, but it's $1.66 higher than it was one year ago.

Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade gas was in the San Francisco Bay Area, at $6.14 per gallon. The lowest average was in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, at $4.19 per gallon.

Gasoline prices are shown at a gas station on June 9, 2022, in Salt Lake City. AP

According to the survey, the average price of diesel dropped 13 cents since June 24 to $5.76 a gallon.

Nation

Biden celebration of new gun law clouded by latest shooting

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is hosting a "celebration" of a new bipartisan law meant to reduce gun violence that, after just 16 days in effect, already has been overshadowed by yet another mass shooting.

The bill, passed after recent gun rampages in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas, incrementally toughens requirements for young people to buy guns, denies firearms to more domestic abusers, and helps local authorities temporarily take weapons from people judged to be dangerous.

But the South Lawn event on Monday morning comes a week after a gunman in Highland Park, Illinois, killed seven people at an Independence Day parade, a stark reminder of the limitations of the new law in addressing the American phenomenon of mass gun violence.

Biden

Biden on Saturday invited Americans to share with him via text—a new White House communications strategy—their stories of how they've been impacted by gun violence, tweeting that "I'm hosting a celebration of the passage of the Safer Communities Act."

The law is the the most impactful firearms violence measure Congress has approved since enacting a now-expired assault weapons ban in 1993. Yet gun control advocates—and even White House officials—say it's premature to declare victory.

"There's simply not much to celebrate here," said Igor Volsky, director of the private group Guns Down America.

"It's historic, but it's also the very bare minimum of what Congress should do," Volsky said. "And as we were reminded by the shooting on July 4, and there's so many other gun deaths that have occurred since then, the crisis of of gun violence is just far more urgent."

Volsky's group, along with other gun violence advocacy groups, was set to host a news conference on Monday outside the White House calling on Biden to stand up a dedicated office at the White House to address gun violence with a greater sense of urgency.

Biden has left gun control policy to his Domestic Policy Council, rather than establishing a dedicated office like he stood up to address climate change or the gender policy council he established to promote reproductive health access.

"We have a president who really hasn't met the moment, who has chosen to act as a bystander on this issue," Volsky said. "For some reason the administration absolutely refuses to have a senior official who can drive this issue across government."

The president signed the bipartisan gun bill into law on June 25, calling it "a historic achievement" at the time.

"Time is of the essence. Lives will be saved," Biden said in the Roosevelt Room during a hastily arranged signing ceremony before he flew to Europe. Referencing the families of shooting victims he has met, the president said: "Their message to us was, 'Do something.' How many times did we hear that? 'Just do something. For God's sake, just do something.' Today we did."

White House officials said Biden doesn't see the passage of the bill as the finish line, but rather a foundation that needs to be built on. The Illinois shooting occurred nine days after the bill signing.

Clotilda descendants mark anniversary of last slave ship

Crew members leave Mobile, Ala., on their way to the wreck of the last U.S. slave ship, the Clotilda, on May 2, 2020. AP

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — Descendants of the last African people abducted into slavery and brought to America's shores gathered over the weekend on the banks of an Alabama river to pay tribute to their ancestors.

The descendants of the 110 people aboard the Clotilda, the last known slave ship to bring enslaved African people to the United States, held a ceremony to mark the anniversary of the vessel's arrival.

Dressed in white and walking slowly to the beat of an African drum, the descendants made their way to the banks of the Mobile River near Alabama's coast. A wreath of white, yellow and red flowers was carried into the river by a kayaker and released into the waters.

The event marked the anniversary of the ship arriving 162 years ago with 110 enslaved people brought to the country against their will, Darron Patterson, president of the Clotilda Descendants Association, said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

In 1860, the Clotilda illegally transported 110 people from what is now the west African nation of Benin to Mobile, Alabama. The voyage, which happened decades after the law banning the importation of slaves had taken effect, began as a bet when a wealthy plantation owner wagered he could import a shipload of slaves without being caught.

The 2019 discovery of the remnants of the Clotilda sparked renewed interest in its saga. But Patterson said the focus should be on the people it carried.

"It's not about the ship. It's not about sails or nails or wood. It's about the people who were in the cargo hold. And their stories were amazing stories," he said. Patterson's great-great-grandfather, Kupollee—a beekeeper, farmer and woodworker — was one of the 110 on the ship.

The captives of the Clotilda endured a cruel ocean voyage packed into a cargo hold and five years of slavery but were able to maintain their African customs, Patterson said.

"The biggest thing for us is to make sure that no one ever forgets this story... America has a long way to go in learning how to embrace its history, including its dark slave history," Patterson said.

Biden says he's mulling health emergency for abortion access

REHOBOTH BEACH, Del. (AP) — President Joe Biden said Sunday he is considering declaring a public health emergency to free up federal resources to promote abortion access even though the White House has said it doesn't seem like "a great option."

He also offered a message to people enraged by the Supreme Court's ruling last month that ended a constitutional right to abortion and who have been demonstrating across the country: "Keep protesting. Keep making your point. It's critically important."

The president, in remarks to reporters during a stop on a bike ride near his family's Delaware beach house, said he lacks the power to force the dozen-plus states with strict restrictions or outright bans on abortion to allow the procedure.

"I don't have the authority to say that we're going to reinstate Roe v. Wade as the law of the land," he said, referring to the Supreme Court's decision from 1973 that had established a national right to abortion. Biden said Congress would have to codify that right and for that to have a better chance in the future, voters would have to elect more lawmakers who support abortion access.

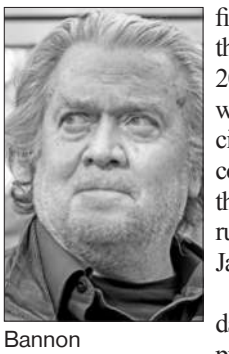
Biden said his administration is trying to do a "lot of things to accommodate the rights of women" after the ruling, including considering declaring a public health emergency to free up federal resources. Such a move has been pushed by advocates, but White House officials have questioned both its legality and effectiveness, and noted it would almost certainly face legal challenges.

The president said he has asked officials "to look at whether I have the authority to do that and what impact that would have."

On Friday, Jen Klein, the director of the White House Gender Policy Council, said it "didn't seem like a great option."

Trump ally Bannon now willing to testify before the Jan. 6 panel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Steve Bannon, a former White House strategist and ally of Donald Trump who faces criminal charges after months of defying a congressional subpoena over the Capitol riot, has told the House committee investigating the attack that he is now willing to testify.


Bannon

Bannon's turnabout was conveyed in a letter late Saturday from his attorney, lawmakers said, as the committee prepares to air some of its most striking revelations yet this week against Trump in what may be its final set of hearings.

"I expect that we will be hearing from him and there are many questions that we have for him," said Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif. She and other committee members said in television interviews Sunday they intend to have Bannon sit for a private interview, which they typically conduct in a deposition with sworn testimony.

Bannon had been one of the highest-profile Trump-allied holdouts in refusing to testify before the committee, leading to two criminal counts of contempt of Congress last year for resisting the committee's subpoena. He has argued that his testimony is protected by Trump's claim of executive privilege. The committee contends such a claim is dubious because Trump had fired Bannon from the White House in 2017 and Bannon was thus a private citizen when he was consulting with the then-president in the run-up to the riot on Jan. 6, 2021.

Still, in recent days, as the former president grew frustrated with what he decried as a one-sided presentation by the committee of seven Democrats and two Republicans, Trump said he would waive that privilege claim, according to a letter Saturday to Bannon's lawyer.

"If you reach an agreement on a time and place for your testimony, I will waive executive privilege for you, which allows for you to go in and testify truthfully and fairly, as per the request of the unselect committee of political thugs and hacks," Trump wrote.

The committee's Thursday evening hearing will examine the three-hour plus stretch when Trump failed to act as a mob of supporters stormed the Capitol. It will be the first hearing in prime time since the June 9 debut that was viewed by 20 million people.

A hearing Tuesday will focus on the plotting and planning of the insurrection by white nationalist groups such as the Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers and the Three Percenters, and will also highlight testimony taken Friday from former White House counsel Pat Cipollone.

Asia

Japan ruling party wins big in the wake of Abe's death

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's governing party and its coalition partner scored a major victory in a parliamentary election Sunday imbued with meaning after the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe amid uncertainty about how his loss may affect party unity.

The Liberal Democratic Party and its junior coalition partner Komeito raised their combined share in the 248-seat chamber to 146 — far beyond the majority — in the elections for half of the seats in the less powerful upper house.

With the boost, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stands to rule without interruption until a scheduled election in 2025.

That would allow Kishida to work on long-term policies such as national security, his signature but still vague "new capitalism" economic policy, and his party's long-cherished goal to amend the U.S.-drafted postwar pacifist constitution.

A charter change proposal is now a possibility. With the help of two opposition parties supportive of a charter change, the governing bloc now has two-thirds majority in the chamber needed to propose an amendment, making it a realistic possibility. The governing bloc already has secured support in the other chamber.

Kishida welcomed the major win but wasn't smiling, given the loss of Abe and the hard task of unifying his party without him. In media interviews late Sunday, Kishida repeated: "Party unity is more important than anything else."

He said responses to COVID-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and rising prices will be his priorities. He said he will also steadily push for reinforcing Japan's national security as well a constitutional amendment.

Chinese bank depositors face police in protest

In this photo released by Yang on Sunday, July 10, 2022, people hold banners and chant slogans during a protest at the entrance to a branch of China's central bank in Zhengzhou in central China's Henan Province. AP

BEIJING (AP) — A large crowd of angry Chinese bank depositors faced off with police Sunday, some roughed up as they were taken away, in a case that has drawn attention because of earlier attempts to use a COVID-19 tracking app to prevent them from mobilizing.

Hundreds of people held up banners and chanted slogans on the wide steps of the entrance to a branch of China's central bank in the city of Zhengzhou in Henan province, about 620 kilometers (380 miles) southwest of Beijing. Video taken by a protester shows plainclothes security teams being pelted with water bottles and other objects as they charge the crowd.

Later videos posted on social media show an unclear number of protesters being shoved forward individually and down stairs by security teams dressed in plain white or black T-shirts. Phone calls to Zhengzhou city and Henan province police rang unanswered.

The protesters are among thousands of customers who opened accounts at six rural banks in Henan and neighboring Anhui province that offered higher interest rates. They later found they could not withdraw their funds after media reports that the head of the banks' parent company was on the run and wanted for financial crimes.

"We came today and wanted to get our savings back, because I have elderly people and children at home, and the inability to withdraw savings has seriously affected my life," said a woman from Shandong province, who only gave her last name, Zhang, out of fear of retribution.

N. Korea likely fired artillery rounds amid US-S Korea drills

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —North Korea appeared to have conducted artillery firing drills on Sunday, South Korea said, days after the United States deployed sophisticated fighter jets to South Korea for joint training.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that it detected multiple trajectories presumed to be North Korean artillery on Sunday afternoon. It said South Korea's military maintained a firm readiness in close coordination with the United States.

South Korea's presidential office said the suspected launches occurred off the North's west coast. It said presidential national security director Kim Sung-han reviewed South Korean military readiness and that his office closely monitors possible additional launches by North Korea.

This year, North Korea has carried out an unusually large number of weapons tests, including nuclear-capable missiles that place both the U.S. mainland and its allies including South Korea and Japan with striking distance. Some experts say North Korea attempts to perfect its weapons technology and boost its bargaining chip in future negotiations with the United States to win sanctions relief or security guarantees.

World

15 killed in Russian strike in Ukraine; 20 may be trapped

CHASIV YAR, Ukraine (AP) — Dozens of Ukrainian emergency workers labored Sunday to pull people out of the rubble after a Russian rocket attack smashed into apartment buildings in eastern Ukraine, killing at least 15 people. More than 20 people were believed still trapped.

The strike late Saturday destroyed three buildings in a residential quarter of the town of Chasiv Yar, inhabited mostly by people who work in nearby factories.

On Sunday evening, rescuers were able to remove enough of the bricks and concrete to retrieve a man who had been trapped for almost 24 hours. Rescuers laid him on a stretcher and he was quickly taken to a hospital.

Ukraine's Emergency Services said the latest rescue brought to six the number of people dug out of the rubble. Earlier in the day, they made contact with three others still trapped alive beneath the ruins.

Pavlo Kyrylenko, governor of the Donetsk region that includes Chasiv Yar, said an estimated 24 people were believed still trapped, including a 9-year-old child.

Cranes and excavators worked alongside rescue teams to clear away the ruins of one building, its walls completely shorn off by the impact of the strike. The thud of artillery on the nearby front line resonated just a few miles away, making some workers flinch and others run for cover.

Valerii, who gave only his first name, was desperately waiting to hear news of his sister and 9-year-old nephew, who lived in the collapsed building and had not answered his calls since Saturday night.

"Now I'm waiting for a miracle" he said, as he stood before the ruins and started to pray, hands clasped together tightly.

"We do not have good expectations, but I am avoiding such thoughts," he said.

Kyrylenko said the town of about 12,000 was hit by Uragan rockets that are fired from truck-borne systems. Chasiv Yar is 20 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Kramatorsk, a city that is a major target of Russian forces as they grind westward.

However, later Sunday, Viacheslav Boitsov, deputy chief of emergency service in the Donetsk Region, told the Associated Press that four shells hit the neighborhood and they were likely Iskander missiles.

Iran enriches to 20% with new centrifuges

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran announced Sunday that it has begun enriching uranium up to 20% using sophisticated centrifuges at its underground Fordo nuclear plant, state TV reported, an escalation that comes amid a standoff with the West over its tattered atomic deal.

That Tehran is enriching uranium up to 20% purity — a technical step from weapons-grade levels of 90% — with a new set of its most advanced centrifuges at a facility deep inside a mountain deals yet another blow to the already slim chances of reviving the accord.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, a spokesman for Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, said uranium enriched to 20% was collected for the first time from advanced IR-6 centrifuges on Saturday. He said Iran had informed the U.N. nuclear watchdog about the development two weeks ago.

Centrifuges are used to spin enriched uranium into higher levels of purity. Tehran's 2015 nuclear agreement with world powers had called for Fordo to become a research-and-development facility and restricted centrifuges there to non-nuclear uses.

Iran had previously told the IAEA that it was preparing to enrich uranium through a new cascade of 166 advanced IR-6 centrifuges at its underground Fordo facility. But it hadn't revealed the level at which the cascade would be enriching.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, told The Associated Press that it had verified on Saturday that Iran was using a set-up that allowed it to more swiftly and easily switch between enrichment levels.

In a report to member states, Director General Rafael Grossi described a system of "modified sub-headers," which he said allowed Iran to inject gas enriched up to 5% purity into a cascade of 166 IR-6 centrifuges for the purpose of producing uranium enriched up to 20% purity.

S. Africa police say 15 killed in bar shooting

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—A mass shooting at a tavern in Johannesburg's Soweto township has killed 15 people and left others in critical condition, according to police.

Police say they are investigating reports that a group of men arrived in a minibus taxi and opened fire on some of the patrons at the bar shortly after midnight Sunday.

Those injured have been taken to Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.

The number of cartridges found on the scene indicates that a group of people opened fire in the bar, said Gauteng province police commissioner Lt. Gen. Elias Mawela.

"The primary investigation suggests that these people were enjoying themselves here, in a licensed tavern operating within the right hours," Mawela told The Associated Press.

"All of a sudden they heard some gunshots, that is when people tried to run out of the tavern. We don't have the full details at the moment of what is the motive, and why they were targeting these people," he said.

"You can see that a high caliber firearm was used and it was shooting randomly. You can see that every one of those people were struggling to get out of the tavern," Mawela told The Associated Press.

The area where the shooting took place was very dark, making it harder to find people who could identify the suspects, he said.

Rifles and a 9 mm pistol were used in the attack, said national police spokeswoman Col. Dimakatso Sello.

In a separate incident, four people were shot dead by unknown gunmen at a tavern in Sweetwaters township in the coastal city of Pietermaritzburg on Saturday night.

Overdrive

Electric cars: More consumers now want to buy them, survey says

By ROB NIKOLEWSKI
THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

Brand new Polestar electric cars sit in a parking lot at a Tesla showroom on June 27, 2022, in Corte Madera, California. The average price for a new electric car has surged 22 percent in the past year as automakers like Tesla, GM and Ford seek to recoup commodity and logistics costs. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

A growing number of Americans are coming around to the idea of driving electric vehicles, with 71% expressing at least some degree of interest in buying or leasing EVs, according to a national survey released Thursday by Consumer Reports.

Of more than 8,000 respondents, 14% said they would definitely buy or lease an EV and 22% said they would "seriously consider" one. Another 35% said they "might consider getting an electric-only vehicle in the future."

That's up from 4% who in 2020 said they would definitely buy or lease an EV.

"Millions of drivers want to go electric, that was clear from the survey," said Quinta Warren, associate director of sustainability policy for Consumer Reports. "So the demand is growing."

The poll was taken between Jan. 27 to Feb. 18, at a time when gasoline prices were on the rise but before they spiked to an average of $5 per gallon nationwide last month and $6.44 in California. That leads Warren to think consumer interest in EVs would be even higher if the survey were conducted today.

"People understand that it costs them less money to charge an electric vehicle than it does to fuel a gas car," she said, "so absolutely, it makes perfect sense to assume that the demand (to transition to EVs) would go up."

While the national numbers are on the rise, 28% of those surveyed said they would not consider switching to an EV and some of the hurdles cited are familiar ones:

- 61% had concerns about where and when they could find places to charge their vehicles
- 55% had "range anxiety" —that is, they feared the EV would conk out before they had a chance to recharge the car's battery, and
- 52% worried about the sticker price and the costs of maintaining an EV.

"People do understandably have some concerns and questions about the transition to electric vehicles and low-carbon fuel vehicles as well," Warren said. "These things are new concepts but the more familiar people are with electric vehicles, the more likely they are to want them."

While California has taken the lead in EV adoption and it's common to see them on roads in the Golden State, the national survey showed many Americans have had very little experience with electric vehicles.

More than 80% of U.S. respondents said they had not been a passenger in an electric-only vehicle in the past year, 65% do not have a friend, relative or co-worker who owns an EV and 41% said they had not seen an EV in their neighborhood in the past year.

Warren said Consumer Reports is still wading through the responses and plans to release data specific to California in the coming weeks.

The survey also found that 46% of those surveyed were not aware of federal and state incentives to purchase an EV. Some 53% said tax rebates or discounts at the time of purchase would encourage them to make the switch.

"We think this is an opportunity for policymakers and automakers to create an awareness campaign, make the public more aware that these incentives exist," Warren said.

Federal tax incentives of up to $7,500 are available, although they phase out after automakers sell more than 200,000 plug-ins. GM and Tesla have already reached the threshold and Toyota on Wednesday announced that it had hit the 200,000 mark and its winddown will begin Oct. 1.

In California, the state offers rebates as high as $7,000 on the purchase or lease of EVs, plug-in hybrids and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

The auto industry has had trouble keeping up with demand for new vehicles because of clogged supply chains. Microchip shortages have resulted in fewer traditional cars and trucks on dealers' lots and that has resulted in vehicles selling for more than their Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price.

EV sale have been impacted, too.

Research from consulting firm AlixPartners estimates the average cost of raw materials needed to make EV batteries — such as lithium, cobalt and nickel — has leaped more than 140% since March 2020, leading automakers to raise prices for their EV models.

Ivan Drury, senior manager of insights at the auto market research firm Edmunds.com, said he was not surprised that Consumer Report's survey showed increasing interest in electric vehicles.

"People's attitudes toward EVs are definitely changing," Drury said. "You see the Ford F-150 Lightning and the Mustang Mach-E, they are sold out. The F-150 Lightning is sold out until 2024 ... I think there's so much enthusiasm, especially for people who have put a reservation down, that it's not going to curb their enthusiasm. They're still going to purchase the vehicle."

The data compiled in the Consumer Reports survey were weighted by factors that included age, gender, ethnicity, education, and Census Division to be proportionally representative of the U.S. adult population. The margin of error for results based on the total sample is plus or minus 1.59 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

A road that charges your EV as you drive? An engineering firm is working on that

By IRENE WRIGHT
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

A 1-mile stretch of roadway in the heart of Detroit could become the proving ground for a technology that promises to zap away electric vehicle owners' fears of running out of juice.

The experiment will test how to turn a road into a big wireless charging platform for EVs driving on it. The inductive charging concept is similar to how many Americans now charge cellphones, electric toothbrushes and power tools—without plugging them in.

Dallas-based engineering giant Jacobs is one of three firms selected by the Michigan Department of Transportation to run the $1.9 million test. It's teaming with inductive charging developer Electreon and Detroit-based clean energy accelerator NextEnergy. Jacobs will manage the project and provide design services.

Electreon's technology works by placing charging coils 3 inches under the roadway and a receiver on the bottom of a car. The receiver holds an opposite charge to the coils, enabling it to draw a current from the roadway that charges the EV.

Stefan Tongur, vice president of U.S. business development for Electreon, said the company has developed and operated inductive roadways in Europe and Israel, both with great success. A 1-mile pilot project in Sweden in 2018 was the first public electric road in the world. The Swedish government is now working with Electreon to build a 20-mile version.

Electreon also made commercial deals for more than 200 electric buses with Israel's largest bus operating company after a successful pilot in Tel Aviv, Tongur said.

"We're not testing whether or not the technology works," said Ron Williams, Jacobs' senior vice president of building and infrastructure for the Americas. "It's just about how we apply it here in the U.S."

The project will build and operate three different types of inductive charging, known as dynamic, semi-dynamic and static.

Dynamic charging allows cars, buses or trucks to charge as they drive over the coils in the road. Those would be placed in highways for long-distance driving.

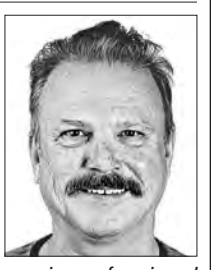
Semi-dynamic charging would be installed in cities and neighborhoods for vehicles that stop often. Coils would be placed in a specific location, like a bus stop, so vehicles could charge as they stopped over the coils for short periods. This works best for public transportation or delivery services with frequent stops.

Static charging is an inductive version of the electric charging that EV owners use today. Coils would be put in parking lots or driveways where vehicles could be parked for longer periods, typically overnight for bus fleets or to charge your car while you sleep.

"It would be about 20% faster on an overnight basis," said NextEnergy president and CEO Jim Saber. "Another advantage is that it would be much easier to do what we refer to as 'smart charging,' and manage the energy that would go through a facility and into the vehicles in the most efficient manner."

Make sure that washer fluid doesn't freeze

MOTORMOUTH
By BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motor-*

Q: One more item to add to your list of things to do to prepare a car for use in a cold state like South Dakota. Make sure the windshield washer fluid isn't plain water or diluted washer fluid. Had that happen to me once. Bought a used car from a dealer that had water in the fluid tank, which froze once the weather got cold. It was a real nuisance until it warmed up enough and I could drain and refill the tank. Even then, I had to squirt the washers several times to get the water out of the hoses that connected the tank to the washers.

A: Good advice. Did you know that despite being blue, windshield washer fluids are different for cold and warm climates? Many fluids for warm climates are formulated to be safe to freezing: 32 degrees Fahrenheit. In cold climates it is formulated to -20 degrees. Any Vegas fluid in the jug may freeze in Sturgis.

Q: You have stated that you do not need high octane fuel unless you have a car with a high compression engine. How do you know if it is a high compression engine? I have a 2016 VW Tiguan and the manufacturer recommends high octane fuel. Can I use regular gas instead? If I do, will it decrease the performance of the vehicle? Based on current gas prices, I would love to be able to use regular.

A: I believe your engine's compression ratio is 10:1, which is on the high end of typical ratios. Many engines also have pressure boosters (turbochargers or superchargers) that require high octane fuel. Using a lower octane fuel will significantly reduce power and performance, but many motorists will trade down to save money.

Q: I recently took my 2011 GMC Acadia in to have a headlight replaced. I remember when I was a kid when a headlight blew out you raised the hood, pulled the old bulb out, got a new bulb and popped it in. Cost about a buck for the bulb. I was a bit astonished to learn that they had to take off the bumper to replace a bulb now. Cost was just a couple of bucks shy of $600. Is this really the norm now?

A: I am afraid it is becoming the norm. I had to replace the washer fluid level sensor in my Ram pickup. I removed the grille to remove the washer bottle so I could get to the sensor on the back of the jug. It took a lot of time to replace a $5 sensor.

Life & Style

Heard attorneys say juror served improperly, seek mistrial

FAIRFAX, Va. (AP) — One of the jurors in the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard defamation trial served improperly, an attorney for Heard alleged in a recent filing that asked the court to declare a mistrial and order a new trial.

"Newly discovered facts" show Juror No. 15 in the six-week trial was not the individual summoned in April to serve in the case, Heard's attorney wrote in a five-page memo filed Friday in Virginia's Fairfax Circuit Court.

Instead, the filing suggests Juror No. 15 was a younger individual with the same last name who "apparently" lives at the same address.

"As the Court no doubt agrees, it is deeply troubling for an individual not summoned for jury duty nonetheless to appear for jury duty and serve on a jury, especially in a case such as this," the filing said.

Depp sued his ex-wife over a December 2018 op-ed Heard wrote in The Washington Post describing herself as "a public figure representing domestic abuse." Much of the testimony focused on whether Heard had been physically and sexually abused, as she claimed. Depp said he never hit Heard and that she was the abuser.

After a televised trial that turned into a spectacle, the jury found in Depp's favor on all three of his claims relating to specific statements in the 2018 piece.

AP

Actors Amber Heard and Johnny Depp watch as the jury leaves the courtroom for a lunch break at the Fairfax County Circuit Courthouse in Fairfax, Va., Monday, May 16, 2022.

The jury decided Depp should receive $10 million in compensatory damages and $5 million in punitive damages, but the judge reduced the punitive damages award to $350,000 under a state cap.

Heard has previously said she plans to appeal the verdict.

News of Friday's filing was first reported by Deadline, which posted the document online.

The memo expanded upon earlier post-trial motions filed by Heard's legal team that asked the judge to throw out the verdict against her. Those motions had raised the possibility that one of the jurors may not have been properly vetted by the court.

The latest filing said a "jury panel list" in the case included a person who would have been 77 at the time of the trial. Voter registration information lists two individuals with the same last name "apparently" residing at the same address, said the filing, in which the names were redacted.

"The individual who appeared for jury duty with this name was obviously the younger one. Thus, the 52-year-old ... sitting on the jury for six weeks was never summoned for jury duty on April 11," violating Heard's due process rights, the filing said.

The Associated Press sent emails seeking comment Sunday to a representative for Depp and two of his attorneys.

'Thor: Love and Thunder' scores franchise best debut

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

Four movies in, Thor is still bringing the hammer down at the box office.

" Thor: Love and Thunder " earned $143 million in its opening weekend in North America, according to studio estimates Sunday. It's a franchise best for the God of Thunder and another success story of the summer 2022 box office season.

The second Thor movie directed by Taika Waititi opened on 4,375 screens this weekend, starting with Thursday previews. It easily topped the box office, bumping "Minions: The Rise of Gru" into second place. Including international showings, where "Love and Thunder" opened in 47 territories starting in the middle of last week, its global total is already at $302 million.

"It's another home run for Marvel," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "It's unheard of for a Marvel movie not to open at No. 1."

The Thor franchise has grown with each subsequent film, which is both a rarity in franchise filmmaking in general but also not uncommon for those of the Marvel variety. The first film opened to $65.7 million in 2011, followed by $85.7 million for "The Dark World" in 2013 and $122.7 million for 2017's "Ragnarok." Waititi, who also directed "Ragnarok," is widely credited with rejuvenating the series, infusing it with humor, irreverence and leaning into larger-than-life metal aesthetics.

Critics skewed mostly positive and the Rotten Tomatoes score is currently sitting at 68% fresh. Audiences, who gave the film a B+ CinemaScore, were heavily male (60%) and 53% were between the ages of 18 and 34, according to exit polls. IMAX reported that $23 million of the global total came from their screens.

"Love and Thunder" brings back Chris Hemsworth, Tessa Thompson and Natalie Portman, whose Jane Foster becomes the Mighty Thor. Russell Crowe also co-stars as Zeus and Christian Bale plays the villain Gorr the God Butcher. It also boasts the biggest production budget of the Thor films, at a reported $250 million.

And yet, it's noteworthy that "Thor: Love and Thunder" isn't even the biggest Marvel opening of the year. That title is held by " Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness, " which debuted to $185 million in early May on the heels of the box office phenomenon that was "Spider-Man: No Way Home."

The Minions carved out a second-place spot with $45.6 million in weekend two, bringing its domestic total to $210.1 million and its worldwide grosses to $399.9 million.

The summer's workhorse "Top Gun: Maverick" placed third in its seventh weekend in theaters with $15.5 million. With its domestic total currently at $597.4 million, the Tom Cruise film is poised to cross $600 million by Monday — one of only 12 films ever to do so.

In limited release, the documentary " Fire of Love " launched this weekend in three locations and made an estimated $22,328, while Claire Denis' "Both Sides of the Blade" earned $25,000 from four locations.

The weekend should net out with around $236.1 million total, which Dergarabedian said is "truly impressive."

"Every week, the marketplace becomes more pre-pandemic like," he said. "This feels like a traditional summer movie season weekend. It's a huge difference from a year ago."

The summer 2022 box office continues to look bright for both Hollywood and theater owners, up 217% from last summer. The year as a whole passed the $4 billion mark last week which is up 233% from last year but still trailing the last pre-pandemic box office year, 2019, by 30%.

Woman chooses to air issues with her family on Facebook

DEAR ABBY: I recently posted on Facebook about how I never get any recognition from my only son on my birthday, Mother's Day or any holiday. My daughter-in-law then responded that I care more about my dogs than my grandchildren. I live in Florida; they live in Kansas. Last year, I offered to fly the girls to Florida for a visit but was told no. I have asked that they come for a visit, but no visits have happened.

I live alone and have five rescue dogs, three rescue cats and foster abandoned kittens. In order for me to visit them, I would have to pay for airfare, parking and a pet sitter, and would need a family member to pick me up and usher me around. I responded that if they wanted to pick up the tab, I would be happy to visit.

They claim I do "nothing" to be a grandmother to their girls. Abby, I started a 529 college fund for them years ago. When I asked what they want me to do, I received no response. At this point, I'm considering changing my will and the beneficiary of my life insurance. When I asked again about what they wanted, she said she needed time. It's been weeks. What now?

NOT MEASURING UP

DEAR NOT MEASURING UP: Not knowing your son and daughter-in-law's financial situation, I can only suspect that the reason they haven't taken you up on your invitation to visit is that they can't afford airfare for four and think you can better afford to do the traveling. It is a shame you had to publicize on Facebook the fact that you have such a distant relationship with them, rather than pick up a phone and discuss it privately.

I'm not sure what you expect your daughter-in-law to do at this point. (Offer to pay for some or all of your expenses?) Your money is, of course, yours to do with as you wish after your death. But wouldn't it be better spent cementing a relationship with your family while you're alive than using it to punish them after you are gone? There are alternative ways to "visit" virtually, to stay in touch and show an interest in your grandkids. More and more people do it these days, and it isn't difficult.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I've been married 30 years to a man who is a good person in every way except one. He lies to me. It's mostly about inconsequential things, but over the past six months, his lies or omissions have rocked the foundations of our marriage. He does it typically to cover up behavior he's ashamed of.

He has promised to be more truthful and transparent, but recently I caught him lying about something I saw with my own eyes. When I called him on it, he admitted the truth. Each time, he swears he will do better. Is he a pathological liar? I feel like I'm at the end of my rope, but I hate to throw away 30 years of marriage and maybe many more if it's something that can be addressed. Please help.

SICK OF LIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR SICK: It appears the man you are married to is a compulsive liar. By now it must be clear to both of you that unless he's willing to work on his inability to tell the truth and seek help from a mental health professional, nothing will change. If you are serious about "throwing away 30 years of marriage," offer him that option before consulting a lawyer.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

BUGS FLY IN SUCH CRAZY LOOPS AND ZIGZAGS. I WONDER WHY THEY DON'T GET DIZZY AND BARF.
MAYBE THEY DO!
EWW, GROSS! HA HA HA! BUT THEN WHY WOULD THEY KEEP FLYING THAT WAY?
MAYBE BUGS LIKE TO BARF!
EWWWW! THEY WOULD!! HA HA HA HA! BLAUGH!
I TELL YOU, HOBBES, IT'S GREAT TO HAVE A FRIEND WHO APPRECIATES AN EARNEST DISCUSSION OF IDEAS.

Garfield®

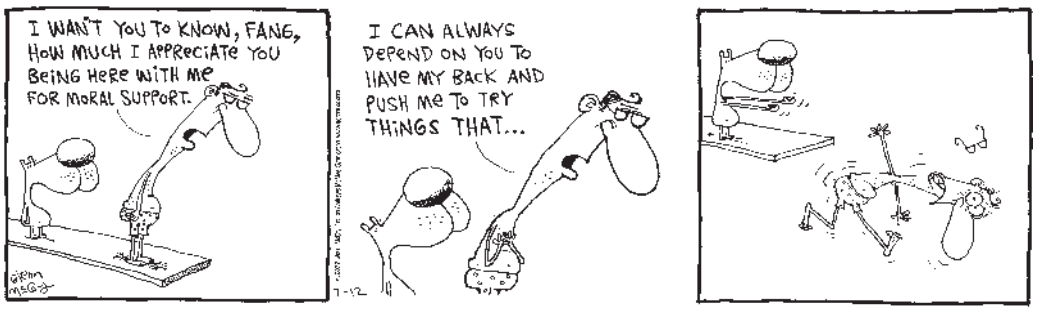
By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I WANT YOU TO KNOW, FANG, HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE YOU BEING HERE WITH ME FOR MORAL SUPPORT.
I CAN ALWAYS DEPEND ON YOU TO HAVE MY BACK AND PUSH ME TO TRY THINGS THAT...

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

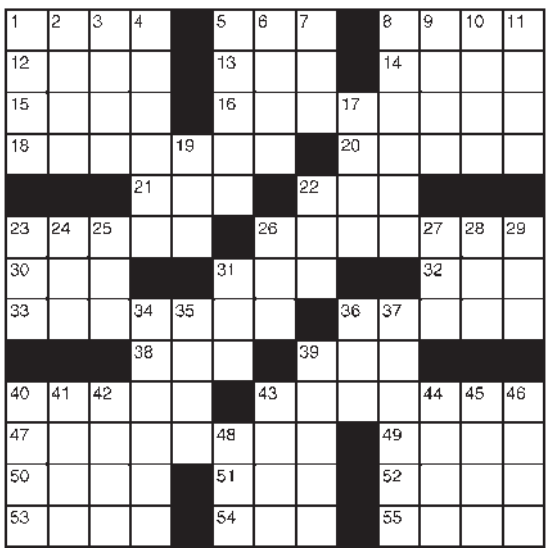
ACROSS
1 Swear
5 Understood
8 Six-pack units
12 Slightly
13 French assent
14 October birthstone
15 Sultry Horne
16 Annoying
18 Michelangelo works
20 Pumped (up)
21 Medit. nation
22 "— Blue?"
23 Cook in the oven
26 Sun spot
30 Take courses?
31 Pie — mode
32 Felon's flight
33 Fake ally
36 Cavorts
38 Mel of baseball
39 UFO crew
40 Top floor
43 Cargo
47 First-termers
49 Contrite one
50 Staffer
51 Brit. record label
52 Actress Fisher
53 Colonial flag maker
54 "Norma —"
55 Harbor arrival

DOWN
1 Baby elephant
2 Cab alternative
3 Trig function
4 Equilibrium
5 Really dig
6 Belonging to us
7 Dead heat
8 Universal
9 Per person
10 Handle
11 Santa's ride
17 Docile
19 Chicago winter hrs.
22 Altar in the sky
23 Ump
24 Rowing need
25 Packed away
26 Aviate
27 Carrier to Amsterdam
28 Napkin's place
29 Ambulance initials
31 Invoice fig.
34 Loud sounds
35 Engrave
36 GPS suggestion
37 Egyptian deity
39 Golfer Els
40 Miles away
41 Half a sextet
42 Turner and Danson
43 Disaster aid org.
44 Get overemotional
45 Prefix with pad or port
46 Snare
48 Mal de —

Solution time: 22 mins.

A	H	A	B	■	I	B	M	■	C	B	E	R
R	O	B	O	■	D	E	M	■	O	R	C	A
C	_	O	Y	■	C	L	D	G	L	O	R	Y
S	E	X	I	S	M	■	C	A	U	C	U	S
■	■	■	S	H	E	A	■	G	M	C	■	■
O	_	D	H	A	N	D	S	■	N	O	S	H
N	E	A	■	M	E	D	■	A	■	L	I	E
O	A	F	S	■	C	L	D	I	R	I	S	H
■	■	■	F	J	R	■	E	E	R	O	■	■
D	I	O	N	N	E	■	S	E	U	R	A	T
O	_	D	H	A	B	I	T	■	T	U	N	A
A	S	I	A	■	A	C	E	■	E	G	A	D
S	A	L	T	■	Y	I	P	■	S	S	T	S

Yesterday's answer 7-12



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Malala Yousafzai, 25; Rachel Brosnahan, 32; Phoebe Tonkin, 33; Steve Howey, 45.

Happy Birthday: Facts and truth matter. Listen, assess and do your research. Trust your intelligence, memory and ability to get to the bottom of anything questionable. Take the initiative and discover unique ways to improve your everyday life. Invest more time and money in how you look and what you know, and up your game with diversification. Live, learn and laugh. Your numbers are 7, 14, 23, 29, 32, 39, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Look for answers, take control and learn about health, stress management and how to achieve a fulfilling, happy life. By being responsible for your decisions, you'll feel better about yourself and the direction you pursue. Avoid overload. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Set your sights on your goal and make whatever changes necessary to get what you want. An assertive attitude will help you push your way past slowpokes holding you back. Don't let uncertainty set in due to emotional interference. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Take charge, and don't rely on others to do things for you. Look at the scope of what you want to achieve. Focus on the details that will get you to your destination; your long-term plan will lead to victory. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Trust in yourself. Don't follow anyone or give others control over what happens to you. Make decisions that contribute to your pursuits. Overreacting will lead to problems. Distance yourself from temptation, and do your best to declutter your life. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Put your responsibilities behind you before you head out to do something more enjoyable. Your spare time will be significantly better if you have a clear conscience. Changing your routine to fit your lifestyle will pay off. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take a hint from someone you respect. Making comparisons can help you visualize what makes you happy and how to accommodate your needs. Putting an end to what is no longer working for you will help you embrace the freedom closure presents. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Concentrate on who and what you want to be, and map out a responsible plan that encourages you to apply your skills and experience to achieve your goals. Arguing won't solve problems; fix yourself before trying to change others. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Revise your plans to fit any changes that pop up. Staying on top of situations will help alleviate stress. Be innovative, use your imagination and learn as you go. Change begins with you. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Overspending and underestimating will play havoc with your life if you lack discipline. A tight schedule will help keep you on the straight and narrow and set your mind at ease. Personal growth and physical fitness are encouraged. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Talk things through to make sure you are on the same page as the people around you, then proceed to the finish line. You'll accomplish your objective if you are earnest, focused and refuse to give in to temptation or outside interference. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Dig deep and you'll discover you have the answer you need to get on with your life. Evaluate, plan and move forward with confidence knowing that you are doing what's best for you. Be a leader and do your own thing. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep trying until you feel comfortable with the results. Share your thoughts with people experiencing similar situations. You will find a way to resolve anything standing in your way. Hope for a better future. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are thoughtful, original and helpful. You are emotional and secretive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5		6			8	
	4				9			2
9				5	7			
						6	3	
8		3				1		5
	2	1						
			6	7				3
2			8				5	
	9			1		4		

Difficulty Level ★★ 7/12

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Monday's Answer

5	2	8	3	4	7	6	1	9
3	9	7	6	5	1	8	2	4
6	4	1	2	8	9	7	5	3
4	7	6	8	9	5	1	3	2
9	1	3	7	2	4	5	8	6
2	8	5	1	6	3	4	9	7
1	5	9	4	3	6	2	7	8
8	3	4	5	7	2	9	6	1
7	6	2	9	1	8	3	4	5

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

BREADMAKING Solution: 8 letters

H	S	E	R	F	K	R	B	C	R	U	M	B	I	I
H	B	O	N	E	E	U	O	A	B	A	N	A	N	A
G	O	R	F	M	T	R	U	O	L	F	E	G	S	S
U	W	N	I	T	N	A	R	O	L	L	R	S	T	H
O	L	T	E	O	S	I	Z	E	P	E	E	E	R	A
D	F	R	G	Y	C	T	S	M	D	N	P	N	U	P
R	O	T	G	S	H	H	I	I	K	S	B	A	C	E
U	C	D	A	T	A	S	E	C	A	A	S	S	T	Y
O	A	R	O	S	P	N	I	V	K	R	D	I	I	P
S	C	L	U	I	T	H	D	E	L	Y	E	T	O	S
L	C	I	Z	S	T	E	N	W	G	O	E	R	N	I
I	I	Z	U	L	T	G	R	A	I	N	S	A	S	R
C	A	G	A	T	T	A	B	A	I	C	P	S	S	C
E	A	S	T	A	E	H	W	E	L	O	H	W	I	T
R	H	T	O	O	M	S	U	O	I	C	I	L	E	D

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Artisan, Bake, Ball, Banana, Bowl, Brioche, Butter, Ciabatta, Cloth, Corn, Crispy, Crumb, Crust, Delicious, Dissolve, Egg, Flour, Focaccia, Fresh, Grain, Honey, Ingredients, Instructions, Pans, Pizza, Raisin, Roll, Salt, Sandwich, Seeds, Shape, Simple, Size, Slice, Smooth, Soft, Sourdough, Steps, Sticky, Sugar, Taste, Thickness, Timer, Whole Wheat, Yeast

Last Monday's Answer:

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 53 through 68,** order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Freeman gets 4 hits, Dodgers roar back to sweep Cubs, 11-9

LOS ANGELES (AP)— The Los Angeles Dodgers have reached the point in their latest roll when a five-run deficit and the early exit of a 20-game winner don't even seem like particularly daunting obstacles.

"We weren't going to be denied today," manager Dave Roberts said. "I just had a feeling we were going to come out on top."

Indeed, the Dodgers did it again Sunday — just as they did on nearly every day of their stellar homestand.

Freddie Freeman went 4 for 5 with a homer and two RBIs, and the top team in the National League rallied from a pair of huge early deficits for its seventh consecutive victory, 11-9 over the Chicago Cubs.

Trea Turner and Will Smith also drove in two runs apiece as Los Angeles finished 10-1 on a homestand for the first time since 1980 despite falling behind 5-0 in the first inning and 8-3 in the third. Gavin Lux reached base four times while Los Angeles surged from behind early and eventually held on to win its final home game before hosting Dodger Stadium's first All-Star Game in 42 years.

"This homestand, it's the best baseball we've played in the past couple of years," Roberts said. "It's Dodger baseball."

With a seventh straight win over the Cubs, the Dodgers swept their season series with Chicago for the first time in the venerable NL franchises' history. Los Angeles beat the Cubs for the 10th straight time overall, matching the longest winning streak in this rivalry since 1947, and swept a four-game series with Chicago at Chavez Ravine for the first time since 1965.

"We just put together good at-bats, one after the other," Smith said. "We're playing well right now."

P.J. Higgins hit his first career grand slam during Chicago's five-run first inning, and David Bote had a three-run homer in the third to put the Cubs up big.

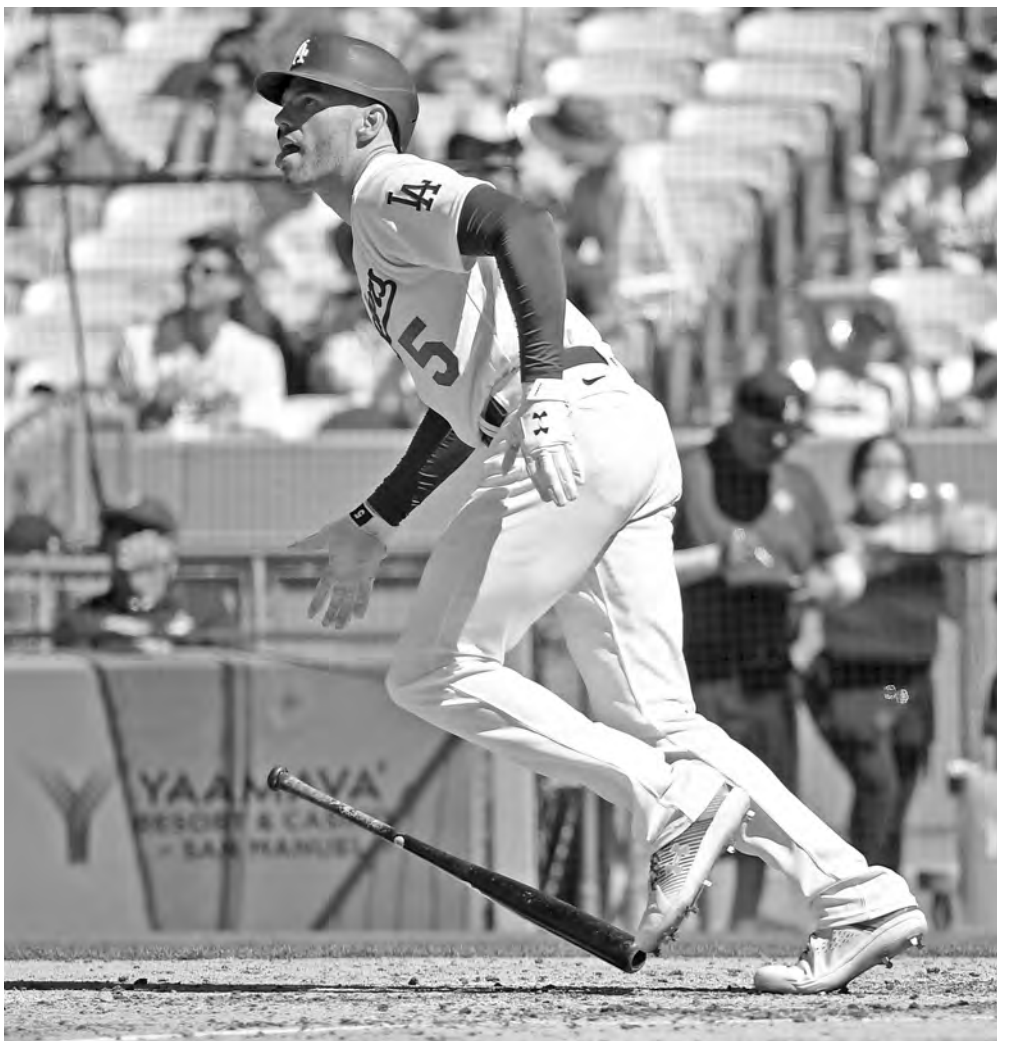
But Chicago's bullpen again failed to contain Los Angeles' powerhouse lineup, blowing a lead for the third time in four games. Chicago finished 2-5 on its road trip and dropped to 0-7 at Dodger Stadium since throwing a combined no-hitter here last July 24.

"We continue to grow and pull from some moments and assess where we could have been better," manager David Ross said. "We'd been playing really good baseball up until this series, and we had a chance to win several of these games. We had some good moments, but bottom line, we've got to win baseball games."

Turner's RBI single put the Dodgers up 9-8 after a six-run third inning in which Los Angeles sent 11 batters to the plate. The inning was extended when Cubs third baseman Patrick Wisdom botched a simple throw to first on Mookie Betts' two-out grounder, allowing two runs to score.

Shortly after Freeman was left off the NL All-Star team, he got his 11th homer of the season in the sixth off Anderson Espinoza. The five-time All-Star added an RBI single in the seventh for his third four-hit game since joining the Dodgers this season.

Nelson Velazquez homered off $30 million left-hander David Price on the first pitch of the eighth for Chicago, but Brusdar Graterol escaped a two-on, nobody-out jam to end the inning. Graterol also pitched a perfect ninth for his third save.



AP

Los Angeles Dodgers' Freddie Freeman drops his bat as he hits a solo home run during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago Cubs Sunday, July 10, 2022, in Los Angeles.

Braves 4, Nationals 3, 12 innings

In Atlanta, Austin Riley hit a tying home run in the eighth inning and a winning single in the 12th off off Jordan Weems (0-1). The defending World Series champion Braves have won six of seven and improved to 29-8 since June 1.

Washington has lost 10 of 11. Juan Soto extended his hitting streak to 13 games — he's batting .409 during the run.

Collin McHugh (2-1) earned the win.

Marlins 2, Mets 0

In New York, Sandy Alcantara alloeed six hits over seven innings and extended his shutout streak to 19 innings and pinch-runner Billy Hamilton scored on a throwing error by catcher Tomás Nido in the 10th.

Luke Williams added an RBI single off Tommy Hunter (0-1), and the Marlins, who won for the eighth time in 11 games. Tanner Scott struck out Francisco Lindor with runners at the corners for his 12th save.

New York's lead in the NL East was trimmed to 1 1/2 games over Atlanta, its smallest since April 16.

Orioles 9, Angels 5

In Baltimore, the Orioles rolled to their eighth straight victory, using successive four-run innings and three RBIs by Ramón Urías.

Baltimore fell behind 2-0 before storming back to complete a 7-0 homestand and its first four-game sweep of the Angels since 2003. The Orioles had not won eight consecutive games in a season since April 22 to May 1, 2005.

Monte Harrison and Max Stassi homered for the Angels, a season-worst 11 games under .500 at 38-49 after a 1-8 trip.

Austin Voth (1-1) pitched five innings to earn his first victory with the Orioles since being claimed off waivers from Washington on June 7.

LA starter José Suarez (1-3) was the loser.

Rockies 3, Diamondbacks 2

In Phoenix, Connor Joe drove in the go-ahead run with a two-out single off All-Star Joe Mantiply in the sevent and Colorado rallied from a 2-0 deficit to take three of four from Arizona for a rare road series win.

Colorado took advantage of third baseman Josh Rojas' throwing error on a potential-inning-ending, double-play grounder to score three unearned runs in the seventh . The Rockies arrived in the desert with a major league-worst 12-26 road record.

Garrett Hampson hit a two-run double off Keynan Middleton (1-2).l.

Germán Márquez (5-7) allowed three hits and two walks in seven innings, and Daniel Bard got three straight outs for his 18th save.

Twins 6, Rangers 5

In Arlington, Texas, Ryan Jeffers broke a 4-4 tie with a sixth-inning homer off Brock Burke (4-2) and Minnesota avoided a three-game sweep. Jeffers was 5 for 8 in the series with four RBIs and two of his seven homers this season.

Byron Buxton hit his 23rd homer for the Twins, who opened a 4 1/2-game lead over second-place Cleveland in the AL Central and avoided what would have been their first four-game losing streak this season.

Corey Seager homered for the third straight game.

Dylan Bundy (5-4) allowed four runs and six hits in five innings, and Tyler Duffey got his second save.

White Sox 4, Tigers 2

In Chicago, left fielder Robbie Grossman dropped Luis Robert's short fly with two outs in the eighth to end his record errorless streak at 440 games since June 13, 2018, leading to two unearned Chicago runs.

Pinch-hitter A.J. Pollock's two-out single broke a 2-2 tie, and Eloy Jiménez followed with a run-scoring single.

Kendall Graveman (3-1) pitched a scoreless eighth for the win. Liam Hendriks tossed a perfect ninth for his 17th save. Michael Fulmer (2-3) took the loss.

Mariners 6, Blue Jays 5

In Seattle, Toronto first baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr. had a throw bust through the webbing of his glove and Seattle took advantage for its eighth straight win, boosted by Carlos Santana's two home runs.

A day after Santana hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning for a 2-1 win, he connected for a go-ahead, two-run drive in the eighth off Adam Cimber (8-3). The Mariners are 16-3 for their best 19-game stretch since 2003.

Toronto was swept in the four-game series and haslost nine of 10.

Seattle trailed 4-1 in the fifth when it loaded the bases with one out. Sam Haggerty then grounded back to David Phelps, who threw home to start what appeared to be an easy inning-ending double play. But catcher Gabriel Moreno's throw broke through Guerrero's first baseman's mitt, allowing a run to score.

Matt Festa (1-0) pitched a perfect eighth and Paul Sewald got his 10th save.

Reds 10, Rays 5

In Cincinnati, Mike Moustakas, Tyler Stephenson and Jonathan India each hit a two-run homer in the third and Cincinnati finished for a three-game sweep that extended its winning streak to four.

Randy Arozarena, Josh Lowe and René Pinto homered for the Rays.

The Reds scored seven runs in the third off rookie Shane Baz (1-2).

Nick Lodolo (2-2) allowed nine hits and three runs in five innings.

Royals 5, Guardians 1

In Kansas City, Mo., Zack Greinke (3-5) pitched five scoreless innings of three-hit ball and combined with four relievers on a five-hitter.

Greinke struck out five and walked one in his 222nd win. He also threw his 50,000th big league pitch, the 17th pitcher to reach that feat since 1988, when pitch count data became available.

Zach Plesac (2-6) gave up three earned runs and six hits in five innings.

Giants 12, Padres 0

In San Diego, Alex Wood (6-7) took a no-hit bid into the sixth before rookie C.J. Abrams single,, and Wilmer Flores had two home runs among his four hits and four RBIs.

Wood went seven innings, allowing three singles while striking out eight and walking one.

Flores and Thairo Estrada each hit a two-run homer off rookie MacKenzie Gore (4-4), who gave up eight runs and eight hits in 3 1/3 innings. Flores also homered in the ninth off Matthew Batten, who started at third.

Cardinals 4, Phillies 3

In St. Louis, Albert Pujols hit his 684th homer and Tommy Edman drove in the tiebreaking run with a sacrifice fly in the eighth off Seranthony Dominguez (4-3).

Pujols, who singled to start the go-ahead rally, has 1,377 extra-base hits to tie Stan Musial for third.

Kyle Schwarber hit his NL-leading 28th homer for the Phillies, who had won three in a row.

Jordan Hicks (2-4) pitched a scoreless inning and Ryan Helsley got his seventh save.

Pirates 8, Brewers 6

In Milwaukee, touted rookie Oneil Cruz hit a tiebreaking homer in the sixth agais Trevor Gott (1-2) and Daniel Vogelbach added a three-run shot in the ninth.

Michael Chavis and Ke'Bryan Hayes also went deep for the Pirates, who took two of three from the NL Central leaders.

Andrew McCutchen had a two-run homer in the ninth for the Brewers against his original team.

Chris Stratton (5-4) won in relief.

Astros 6, Athletics 1

In Oakland, Calif., Korey Lee got his first three hits in the major leagues and drove in three runs

All-Star outfielder Kyle Tucker hit his 17th home run, helping the first-place Astros to their 11th victory in 13 games.

Jake Odorizzi (4-2) had a season-high seven strikeouts in seven scoreless innings for his first win after missing 42 games with a lower left leg injury.

Cole Irvin (3-7) allowed two runs and five hits in six innings. The left-hander has one victory in 10 starts since coming off the injured list May 22.

Zion Williamson, Pelicans aim to end 'negative' narratives

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A few months after Zion Williamson was left entirely out of Pelicans promotional material regarding ticket renewals, the injury-riddled star forward was back to being celebrated Wednesday as a supremely influential figure in New Orleans' future.

"The last few months were a roller-coaster of emotions," Williamson said. "The world just ran with narratives, and so when my family was going out in public, they're getting harassed by people about why we don't like New Orleans or why we don't want to be here, when that's not the case at all.

"I wasn't able to play because my foot was broke," Williamson continued. "Every time I checked my phone it's always something negative. Even when you're trying to make positive of the situation, it was very tough."

So the Pelicans used the occasion of Williamson signing a $193 million, five-year contract extension — which could be worth up to $231 million if the explosive, 6-foot-6, 280-pounder lives up to the potential he's displayed when healthy — to try to dispel past notions of distrust and start a new narrative.

"This is a really momentous occasion for all of us," said David Griffin, the Pelicans' executive vice president of basketball operations. "This is an opportunity for us as an organization to really put to bed a lot of things that were said.

"So many things that are talked about are just words," Griffin continued as Williamson nodded in agreement beside him. "What Zion Williamson did today is express his commitment to this team and to this city and to this community. ... So the noise that's on the periphery of all of that is completely irrelevant."

Williamson appears healthy now, cleared by the club to engage in basketball activities without restrictions. Recently, he and his stepfather, Lee Anderson, have been running basketball camps for kids at a New Orleans YMCA, where Williamson formally signed his contract while campers stood behind him and applauded.

It also was Williamson's 22nd birthday, and he commented, while grabbing Griffin's shoulder and smiling, that it was his best birthday yet.

"Thank y'all for really sticking with me the past year," Williamson said to the Pelicans' brass. "It was a tough year, and then for the Pelicans to come give this birthday gift, I'm not going to let 'em down. I'm not going to let the city down, I'm not going to let my family down, and most of all, I'm not going to let myself down."

Now the 2019 No. 1 overall draft choice out of Duke, who has played in just 85 games in his first three seasons, is primed to see how much his return could help a squad that improved dramatically late last season and made a surprisingly competitive playoff showing without him.

Griffin, meanwhile, sees his vision for building a young team set up for sustained success coming together under Willie Green, who in his first season as an NBA head coach shepherded the team from a 1-12 start to postseason qualification, two play-in victories and two more victories in a first-round series against top-seeded Phoenix.

"We feel like with the team we have assembled, with Zion as an enormous part of that, coach Green and his staff are going to be able to put together an incredible run," Griffin said. "We're young, we're talented and most importantly we are very hungry."

Williamson played in just 24 games as a rookie because of a preseason right knee injury (lateral meniscus). In his second season, he played in 61 of 72 games, averaging a team-high 27 points and becoming a first-time All-Star during what was his lone NBA campaign not mostly or entirely wiped out by injuries.

"Zion is a huge part of what we want to accomplish," Green said, noting that Williamson will periodically initiate the offense handling the ball as he did successfully in is second season. "It's not necessarily him fitting in. He can do that with any team in the league. It's about maximizing the group that we have when we had him to it. And, frankly, I think it's going to be scary for the rest of the NBA."

Williamson said he is focused on adopting strategies meant to preserve his health and promote career longevity — but cutting down on vigorous, high-flying dunks in favor of lower-impact layups probably won't be one of them.

"I'm a competitor, so when I'm on the court, I'm not thinking about, "Let me lay this ball in; hopefully my career will last longer,"' Williamson asserted with a playful grin. "No, I'm thinking about putting that person through the rim. So, as far as me dunking, that's going to always happen. That's going to stay happening, no matter what (team trainers and management) are talking about. I'm always dunking. Come on, man!"

AP

New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson shakes hands with New Orleans Pelicans head coach Willie Green with New Orleans Pelicans vice president of basketball operations David Griffin standing in the background after talking to the media about signing his contract extension at the Dryades YMCA in New Orleans, Wednesday, July 6, 2022.

Beal believes Wizards can win title after his max deal

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bradley Beal and the Wizards renewed their commitment to each other when he agreed to a five-year deal worth up to $251 million to stay in Washington. Whether that commitment will make the next five years any more successful than the last 10 is the big question.

"I want to win a championship and I want to do it here," Beal said Friday in a news conference to discuss his max-value contract. "I believe that we can win in D.C."

There hasn't been much evidence that the Wizards can back up that belief. Since drafting Beal in 2012 to play alongside point guard John Wall, the Wizards have made five playoff appearances, never advancing beyond the second round — and the last time they got even that far was five years ago, the last full season Wall played in Washington.

Since then, the Wizards have had a revolving door at point guard alongside Beal, who averaged over 30 points in 2019-20 and 2020-21, and haven't persuaded a big-name free agent to join him in a star-driven league.

"We have the opportunity to show the NBA what happens, the commitment that we'll make to our players, to their career," general manager Tommy Sheppard said. "You're talking about one of the most coveted free agents on the market re-signing with the Washington Wizards, committing to what he believes, that we can win here."

AP

Washington Wizards guard Bradley Beal (3) looks on during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Boston Celtics, on Jan. 23, 2022, in Washington. B

This season, the Wizards will surround Beal with big man Kristaps Porzingis, acquired in a midseason trade with Dallas; Kyle Kuzma, who became the team's primary scorer with Beal sidelined by injury in the second half of last season; a new point guard in Monte Morris, acquired in a trade with Denver; and a collection of young role players including Rui Hachimura, Deni Avdija, Corey Kispert and Daniel Gafford.

"We're doing everything we can to make that mix right. We're a free agent away," owner Ted Leonsis said. "We're always looking at how we can improve, and Tommy has been given the green light and I've said no to nothing. I want to win."

Beal has become rooted in the Washington area through philanthropic efforts and has shown a growing awareness of social issues. He began his news conference by lamenting the imprisonment of WNBA star Brittney Griner in Russia; the mass shooting at a July 4 parade in Highland Park, Illinois; and a spate of gun violence in his hometown of St. Louis.

His two young sons attended the news conference and Beal noted that because of his financial security, "they think they won't have to work for anything. I have to try to find that balance and figure it out. You don't see that all the time, especially in the Black community."

Beal said he's comfortable with his decision and that winning a championship in Washington would be more satisfying than chasing a title with a "super team."

"You proved all the doubters wrong. You did everything you possibly could to make it work and you did it. That would mean everything to me," Beal said. "That would mean more than leaving and playing with four All-Stars. And, having conversations with guys who have done that, it's not always great. It's not always fun. It's not always what you think it is."

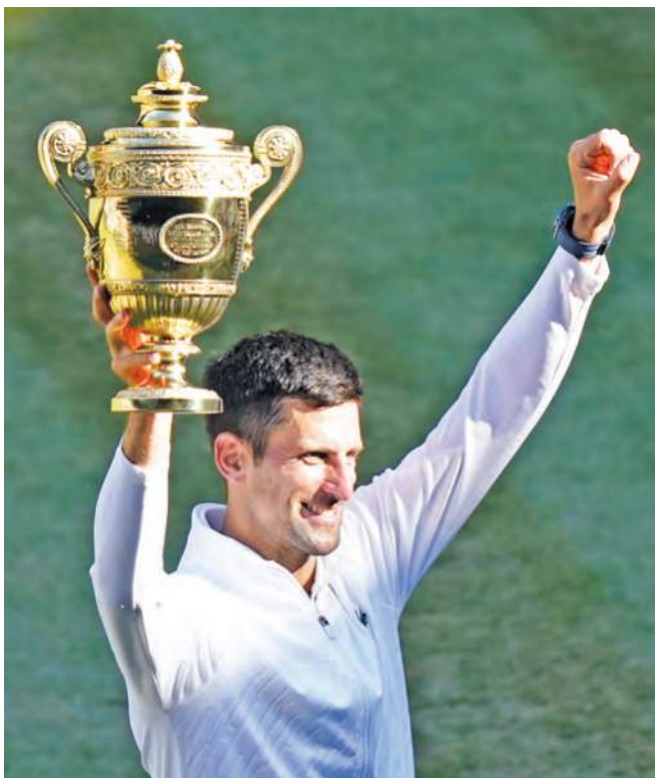
Djokovic tops Kyrgios for 7th Wimbledon, 21st Slam trophy

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)—Novak Djokovic waited. He waited for Nick Kyrgios to lose focus and lose his way. Waited to find the proper read on his foe's big serves. Waited until his own level rose to the occasion.

Djokovic is not bothered by a deficit — in a game, a set, a match. He does not mind problem-solving. And at Wimbledon, for quite some time now, he does not get defeated.

Djokovic used his steady brilliance to beat the ace-delivering, trick-shot-hitting, constantly chattering Kyrgios 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (3) on Sunday for a fourth consecutive championship at the All England Club, seventh overall there, and 21st from all Grand Slam tournaments.

"It's weird. I felt like he didn't do anything amazing today," said the unseeded Kyrgios, offering an assessment with which some might not concur, given that Djokovic accumulated 31 winners and merely eight unforced errors over the last two sets, while facing zero break points in that span.



AP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic holds the winner's trophy as he celebrates after beating Australia's Nick Kyrgios to win the final of the men's singles on day fourteen of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Sunday, July 10, 2022.

"But he was just so composed. That's what I was just thinking to myself. In big moments, it just felt like he was never rattled. I feel like that's his greatest strength: He just never looks rattled," said Kyrgios, about whom those words likely have not been uttered. "He just looks completely within himself the whole time. Didn't look like he was playing overaggressive, even though it felt like he was playing big."

Among men, only Roger Federer owns more Wimbledon titles than Djokovic, with eight, and only Rafael Nadal owns more major trophies, with 22.

"The more you win, it's logical the more confident, the more comfortable you feel out there every next time you step out on the court," said the top-seeded Djokovic, who was pleased to hear some spectators at Centre Court chanting his nickname, "No-le! No-le!" as he served out the final point of a tremendously well-played tiebreaker.

As of now, Djokovic will not be able to try to pull even with Nadal by winning the U.S. Open, which begins in late August: The 35-year-old Serbian can't enter the United States because he decided not to get any shots against COVID-19, the same reason Djokovic missed the Australian Open in January.

"I'm not vaccinated," Djokovic said Sunday, "and I'm not planning to get vaccinated."

Aside from his experience — 32 Grand Slam final appearances versus one for the unseeded Kyrgios — his skill and his clutch gene shined in the concluding tiebreaker, and all of those qualities were present for two particularly pivotal games that helped swing the match.

"Key moments," Djokovic called them.

They were games in which Djokovic steeled himself, and Kyrgios blinked. And games that Kyrgios would not let go as he began engaging in running monologues, shouting at himself or his entourage (which does not include a full-time coach), earning a warning for cursing, finding reason to disagree with the chair umpire he fist-bumped before the match, and chucking a water bottle.

With Djokovic serving for the second set at 5-3, Kyrgios got to love-40 — a trio of break points. But Kyrgios played a couple of casual returns, and Djokovic eventually held. When that set ended, Kyrgios waved dismissively toward his box, sat down and dropped his racket to the turf, then groused to no one in particular: "It was love-40! Can it get any bigger or what?! Is that big enough for you?!"

Djokovic noticed.

"He knew on this stage, when Nick starts to talk, he's going to be vulnerable," said Djokovic's coach, 2001 Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic. "That happened."

In the third set, with Kyrgios serving at 4-all, 40-love, he again let a seemingly sealed game get away, with Djokovic breaking there.

"It was a huge momentum shift," Djokovic said, "because up to that point we were quite even."

Kyrgios was almost perfect in the first set, with 11 winners before he made a second unforced error. The 40th-ranked Kyrgios, a 27-year-old from Australia, never had been past the quarterfinals in 29 previous Grand Slam appearances — and the last time he made it even that far was 7 1/2 years ago.

His talent is unmistakable. But over the years, Kyrgios has drawn more notice for his preference for style over substance on court, his tempestuousness that has earned him ejections and suspensions and his taste for the nightlife.

During the past two weeks alone, Kyrgios racked up $14,000 in fines — one for spitting at a heckling spectator after a first-round victory, another for cursing during a wildly contentious win against No. 4 seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the third round — and caught flack for wearing a red hat and sneakers before or after matches at a place where all-white clothing is mandated. Word also emerged that he is due in court next month in Australia to face an assault allegation.

On Sunday, Kyrgios tried shots between his legs, hit some with his back to the net, pounded serves at up to 136 mph and produced 30 aces. He used an underarm serve, then faked one later.

For all of the significant records and other factoids logged in the 560-page Wimbledon Compendium — including categories such as "ambidextrous players" or "runners-up who wore glasses in a final" — no mention is made of "underarm serves in a gentleman's final," but it seems safe to say that was a first.

PIC Hafa Adai 5K Color Run returns

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

The Hafa Adai 5K Color Run—one of the island's most colorful events—will be making a comeback after a three-year hiatus this coming July 30.

Prior to the start of the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's signature event, a Zumba session near the starting area at the hotel's parking lot will be held.

The run is an untimed-everyone-wins fundraising fun run that starts and finishes at PIC in San Antonio with the turning point at Aquarius Beach Tower. Non-toxic color powder made with cornstarch and food coloring from five different color stations will be thrown at runners during the fun run.

"All proceeds generated from this event will go to E-Land Community Fund, which will be spent for the betterment of Marianas community under the company's corporate social responsibility program. The company has been engaged in diverse community outreach activities and charitable donations to local non-profit organizations," said E-Land Corporate Social Responsibility manager Lindsay Ahn.

"Before the pandemic, the Hafa Adai 5K had become one of annual traditions where the community gathers for happy memories and fun exercise. We are glad to bring our signature event back and hope many residents of the Marianas as well as tourists would join the run," said PIC Sports, Entertainment, and Activity director Dennis Tababa.

There will also be a chance for runners to win raffle prizes as well.

From July 1 onward, the registration fee is $15 and T-shirts are given only while supplies last.

An announcement will be made for racers to pick up their shirts and race number bibs prior to race day.

Online registration is open at https://raceroster.com/events/2022/60612/hafa-adai-5k-2022.

Registration may be done in person as well at the PIC Information Counter daily from 10am to 5pm.

For more information, call (670) 237-5147 and ask for SEA manager Reymark Castro or SEA director Dennis Tababa.

LAM

From Page 20

ships champion, Lam lost his first two matches. Lam went down, 6-1, 6-0, in his first round match against Benjamin Chelia of Argentina. He also lost 6-0, 6-0, against Keaton Hance of the U.S. in his second round match.

"He was not at all happy with the way he played (neither was I). We talked a lot about that match and then he had his best performance of the tournament against Todoran. After that match he was really happy and excited about his standard of play. Just focusing on his performance rather than the outcome or the score was a major boost for him," said Race, who mentored Lam on Saipan before he moved to Europe with his family a couple of years back.

Lam now resides in Mallorca, Spain and one of his coaches is Tony Nadal, uncle of 21-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal.

Lam and Das and their coaches (Das was coached by Celine Schneider) competed at Wimbledon with their airfare, accommodation, meals, transfers, transportation, and accreditation all fully paid.

The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club established Inaugural 14U Championships because they want to see juniors being able to compete on grass earlier in their careers than is currently the case. The 14U boy's and girl's events (16 draw) showcased the best 14U players from each of the six International Tennis Federation regions plus the four grand slam nations.

NMI

From Page 20

Hix, Summer Manahane, Rizza Relucio, and Britany Wally; and forwards Jannah Casarino and Tyana Kileleman-Hix. Joining the players and Koo in the training camp are assistant coach Chi Ming Tang, team manager Irish Pagarao, and assistant team manager Emma Lee.

The delegation kicked off the training camp with daily morning training sessions, which will run until Wednesday. The team has also started playing in a series of friendly matches last weekend, losing to the Guam U14 Boys National Team, 3-6, on Saturday, before recovering the next day after beating the Southern Heat Club, 6-0.

On Monday, the NMI Women's Team was scheduled to face Guam's U17/U20 Women's National Team at 6:30pm, while on Tuesday and Wednesday, the squad will continue to square off with their Guam counterparts, also in the 6:30pm matches.

The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, which facilitated the team's training camp, would like to thank the GFA under the leadership of its president Tino San Gil for hosting the visiting group. ***(PR)***

QUEENS

From Page 20

Lady Eagles, the former won 19-7. In the men's games, Man Amigos won against 2021 defending champions Peleliu, 21-7; Team Aimeliik lost via forfeit against Tokahao; Hagu Lamun won 6-5 versus Ngaraad Red Men; Asahi won versus Momma Charo, 19-4; and Salty Boys lost via forfeit against Sufa.

To start off the league, the opening ceremony was held at 8am to welcome all the teams participating and all the supporters who came out.

BASA thanked MarPac for sponsoring our 2022 Budweiser BASA League. The league also thanked the Saipan Mayor's Office for the trash trailer, James Sablan of DanDan Middle School for the field usage, and Department of Public Works for helping clear the field.

"The official umpires for this season are Hector Efraim and Luis Mesa, and at the press box we have Joe Lizama as our announcer and statistician. Thank you all for your participation and your support," said BASA.

The 2022 BASA officers are president Leo Bobai, vice president McQueen Masaharu, secretary Felisa Brel, treasurer Timberley Ngewakl, and co-treasurer Elsie Ngewakl. The board members are Poland Yamada as board chairperson, Johnvianney Tutiiy as the vice chairperson, Johnseng Shiprit as the treasurer, Hector Efraim as the secretary, and Mike Guerrero.

Freeman gets 4 hits, Dodgers roar back to sweep Cubs, 11-9

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Djokovic tops Kyrgios for 7th Wimbledon, 21st Slam trophy

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Lam becomes youngest player at Wimbledon

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The CNMI's La Hunn Lam made history last week when the 12-year-old became the youngest player ever to compete at Wimbledon.

Lam and another Oceania netter, Aishi Das of New Zealand, were selected by the Oceania Tennis Federation to represent the region in the Inaugural 14U Championships at Wimbledon that took place from July 7 to 10, 2022.

While Lam didn't win any of his matches against older and more experienced junior tennis players, he did create some waves at the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club after an impressive match against No. 2 seed Matei Todoran of Romania.

According to CNMI sports hall of famer and national coach Jeff Race his ward showed some promise against Todoran.

"It was his best match so far. He played the No. 2 seed and lost 6-1, 6-2 but played with confidence and a lot of poise for his age. La Hunn really made him work for and sweat for his victory though. He actually led 2-0 in the second set," said Race.

Todoran actually didn't lose a set throughout the Inaugural 14U Championships at Wimbledon and culminated his perfect run by beating No. 6 seed Maximilian Heidlmair of Austria in the finals, 6-3, 6-1.

Before the breakthrough match against the eventual Inaugural 14U Champion-

See LAM on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The CNMI's La Hunn Lam, left, poses with eventual Inaugural 14U Championships at Wimbledon winner Matei Todoran of Romania at the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club.

NMI Women's National Team starts training camp in Guam

The NMI Women's National Team begun its weeklong training camp in Guam last Thursday at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Dededo.

Head coach Luam Khen Koo said that the training camp is a perfect opportunity to work on individual and group improvements and get the team ready for upcoming tournaments.

"As we've done with previous training camps, we will use this opportunity to further improve the team, and since there are no international competitions this year, we need to keep them in good shape," said Koo.

"Initially, we were supposed to go to the Philippines to train at Tuloy Foundation's XO Field and have our players experience a different environment and atmosphere. However, with the rising COVID-19 cases there, we decided to have the training camp in Guam," he added.

The Women's National Team is comprised of 19 players and four team officials. The delegation includes goalkeepers Mia Abuan and Deseha Mendiola; defenders Christina Atalig, Julie Chavez, Khristelle Itaas, Pia Ngewaki, Dianne Pablo, and Sophia Quintos; midfielders Allyssya Angeles, Guinevere Borja, Aubrey Castro, Kaithlyn Chavez, Stephanie Flores, Tamia Kileleman-

See NMI on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Players of the NMI Women's National Team pose for a group photo at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport before leaving for Guam for a weeklong training camp.

Queens of Diamond dominates first softball game

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

During the first Sunday of the Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association, crowds of families and friends gathered at the Dandan Softball Field for two games between the women's teams and five games between the men's teams, for a total of seven games played.

The first game of the day was between the women's teams 670 Babes versus Queens of Diamond, which the latter won by the blowout score of 15-0.

The first at-bat for the game and home team, Queens of Diamond, was a home run by Kianu Aldan, followed by runs scored from two more batters, "Baby K" and Bert Camacho, for a score of 3-0 in the first inning.

The 670 Babes' first three batters—Catalina Dela Cruz, Tiah Camacho, and Lizann Deleon Guerrer—were unable to retaliate as they were shut down for three outs in a row.

In the second inning, the Queens of Diamond scored another four runs courtesy of Kianu Aldan once again, "Baby K," Erin Mendiola, and Keolani Rios to widen the lead 7-0. In the third inning, Allanah Sablan scored one more run for an 8-0 lead.

In the fourth and final inning, the 670 Babes came up empty as the Queens put up seven more runs from seven of their batters to win the game, 15-0.

In the other women's game between Hotshots versus

See QUEENS on Page 19

LEIGH GASES
Team Sufa poses for a photo during the first day of the Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Softball League last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.